

**QUOTE OF THE DAY**  
 The pioneer  
 It is a great honour to represent Telangana in the Rajya Sabha. Telangana has a rich cultural heritage. It stood against the bourgeois system. Telangana has empowered women. The politics of vengeance is increasing in the country. This situation exists in many states along with Telangana. The Congress needs to work more actively considering this candidate in TG

- Abhishek Manu Singhvi, Congress leader, Telangana

**EAM calls on Kuwaiti PM, Crown Prince; discuss bilateral ties**

**DON'T MISS...**  
 Sri Lankan President Wickremesinghe...

Sri Lankan President Ranil Wickremesinghe has emphasised the importance of strengthening economic cooperation and regional integration with Japan to India, with a special focus on deepening ties with New Delhi, as his country seeks to emerge from bankruptcy. Wickremesinghe's comments came as he was virtually addressing the Head of State Session of the 3rd Voice of Global South Summit, held under the theme "An Empowered Global South for a Sustainable Future." From the north-central... -PAGE: 2

**New varieties of rakhis grab...**

Ahead of Raksha Bandhan, the markets are abuzz with various varieties of colourful rakhis, including eco-friendly ones. Over the period of time, rakhis have evolved from simple sacred red thread to gold or silver made rakhis which one can find on online jewellery sites. Despite being expensive, these rakhis have witnessed huge demand from the customers, the price of which varies from Rs 700 and above. With regards to creative and colourful rakhi threads, the prices vary from Rs 3 to Rs 600, depending on the... -PAGE: 3

**ISRO's SSLV, private players Skyroot...**

ISRO's latest satellite launch vehicle "SSLV" is the first rocket in its category to be ready for commercialisation with two others, "Vikram" from Skyroot and "Agnibaan" from Agnikul Cosmos, expected to vie for market share to place small satellites in orbit. According to industry estimates, the satellite launch market in India is expected to grow from USD 720 million in 2022 to USD 3.5 billion by 2033 and small satellites are likely to be the most preferred modes for a number of applications ranging... -PAGE: 8

**Our fight will continue, truth...**

Overwhelmed by the grand reception she received on her arrival from the Paris Olympics, wrestler Vinesh Phogat said that her fight against the Wrestling Federation of India (WFI) would continue and hoped that "truth will prevail". Hundreds of supporters had gathered outside the IGI airport here on Saturday to give a rousing welcome to Vinesh who was disqualified for being overweight after reaching the 50kg final at the Olympics. Vinesh's appeal against her disqualification was... -SPORTS

**'MY EMOTIONAL BREAKDOWN DURING SHOOT OF ADHA RE ADHA MADE ME REALISE CHALTI RAHE ZINDAGI'**

**Ankith Koyya's big break in Maruthi Nagar SUBRAMANYAM!**

# CM invites 'Rajus' to invest in Future City

Says "Kshatriyas will win anywhere as they have a hard-working nature"

"People who are greater than me are humbled in front of the stage. That is the greatness of Kshatriyas. The Kshatriyas made Kompally a big city. Even in the media, Kshatriyas are ruling the roost. Kshatriyas excel in any field they enter. A Telugu movie cannot be named without Krishnam Raju."



CM Revanth Reddy at Kshatriya Seva Samithi's felicitation programme held at Gachibowli Stadium on Sunday

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Chief Minister Revanth Reddy gave a call to the Rajus (Kshatriyas) to invest in Future City and assured them of the government's cooperation.

The CM said the Congress government would help to build the Kshatriya Bhavan and added that we will meet again at the Kshatriya Bhavan. Addressing the Kshatriya Seva Samithi's felicitation programme on Sunday at the Gachibowli Stadium, the CM said

that Kshatriyas are synonymous with victory and trust.

"Kshatriyas will win anywhere as they have a hard-working nature. Actor Prabhas, who belongs to the community made Telugu cinema famous worldwide," he said. The CM also recalled his memories with the late actor Krishnam Raju.

"People who are greater than me are humbled in front of the stage. That is the greatness of Kshatriyas. The Kshatriyas made Kompally a big city. Even in the media, Kshatriyas are ruling the roost. Kshatriyas

excel in any field they enter. A Telugu movie cannot be named without Krishnam Raju. It is painful that Krishnam Raju is not with us now. Ramgopal Varma, who has shown his strength in Bollywood, is a friend of mine. A Hollywood-type movie is unimaginable without Prabhas. The hands of Kshatriyas can be seen in the development of Hyderabad," the CM said.

He said that Bose Raju played a key role in the Congress coming to power in Telangana.

# Local body elections only after caste census, says Ponnam

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Local body elections will be held only after conducting a caste census in the state, Transport and BC Welfare Minister Ponnam Prabhakar said.

He said the Cabinet had passed a resolution and issued a GO allotting Rs 150 crore to conduct the caste census. He said that the caste census will start soon and that no one should worry as the government is sincere regarding this.

Addressing Sardar Sarvai Papanna Goud's 374th birth



anniversary celebrations at the Ravindra Bharati on Sunday,

Prabhakar said that Chief Minister Revanth Reddy had enquired about it several times.

A discussion is going on whether to conduct the caste census using an agency or by a government department and the government will reveal paperwork regarding the caste census within 10 days, he said.

Ponnam said the government had decided to provide safety moku to toddy tappers, however, only 10,000 safety moku are ready now. He said that the government will ensure that no toddy tapper gets killed by falling from a toddy tree.

# Indiramma Rajyam inspired by Sardar Papanna: Bhatti

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The Congress's Indiramma Rajyam drew inspiration from the life of Sardar Sarvai Papanna, Deputy Chief Minister Bhatti Vikramarka Mallu said.

He hailed Sardar Sarvai Papanna who fought against feudal lords to protect the rights of the downtrodden.

Speaking on the occasion of the birth anniversary of Sardar Sarvai Papanna on Sunday, the Deputy CM said Papanna wanted to see the



downtrodden seizing power and tried to achieve it. He fought for the weak to improve their living standards, Bhatti said.

**Oppn disturbing farmers with campaign of lies: Tummala**

# 'Plan ready for merging BRS with Congress'

Sanjay says Cong needs BRS MLAs but BJP doesn't need an alliance

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The plan to merge the BRS into the Congress is ready, Union Minister of State for Home Affairs Bandi Sanjay Kumar said.

He said that Chief Minister Revanth Reddy is floating rumours that the BRS would merge with the BJP only to know the public pulse. He said that as far as the BJP is concerned the BRS is submerged in the Ganga and the BJP has no use for the BRS. Speaking to the media on Sunday at Koti, Union Minister



Sanjay said the BJP will not allow family-based parties to come near it.

However, the situation that exists now is that the people would stone anyone who utters the name of BRS Working President KT Rama Rao.

Recalling that the BRS had earlier merged the CLP into itself, Sanjay said that now the Congress is merging the BRS into the CLP and that Chief Minister Revanth Reddy has prepared a plan for it.

He said the BRS is an outdated party and that the Congress needs BRS MLAs but the BJP has no need to enter into any kind of understanding with the BRS.



**Congress betrayed farmers using loan waiver scheme: KTR**

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

BRS Working President KT Rama Rao addressed a letter on Sunday to the Leader of the Opposition (LOP) in the Lok Sabha, Rahul Gandhi, and AICC President Mallikarjuna Kharge saying that the Congress government had betrayed the farmers of Telangana in the name of the farm loan waiver scheme.

In his letter, KTR said that he is writing a letter on behalf of the lakhs of farmers of Telangana who have been deeply disappointed by the Congress government's failure to fulfil its promise of a crop loan waiver.

"Congress leaders, including you (Rahul Gandhi) and Chief Minister Revanth Reddy, made a grand promise during the Assembly elections that they would implement the Rs 2 lakh loan waiver scheme at one go on December 9, 2023. This loan waiver promise is a key component of the Congress's 'Warangal Rythu Declaration' released by you in 2022.

# TG lands now in a foreign company's hands: Ponguleti

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Revenue Minister Ponguleti Srinivas Reddy said that Telangana lands are now in the hands of a foreign company. The BRS government handed over the Dharani Portal to a foreign company which was close to them, Ponguleti said.

Speaking to a private TV channel on Sunday, he said the mistakes committed by the BRS

government in the Dharani Act are the main reason for the creation of Indiramma Raj in Telangana.

The BRS government brought the Dharani Act stating that it will solve all land issues, however, the problems increased 100 times after that, he said.

He said that farmers suffered losses due to loopholes in the Dharani Act and that earlier farmers could approach

the officers of all-India services -- the Indian Administrative Service (IAS), Indian Police Service (IPS) and Indian Forest Service (IFoS) -- and Group A services, among others.

# Privatisation of IAS is 'Modi's guarantee' for ending reservation: Rahul Gandhi

• Congress leader slams lateral entry

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Leader of Opposition in the Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi on Sunday termed as an "anti-national step" the government's move of recruiting public servants through lateral entry, alleging that the reservation of SCs, STs and OBCs is being "openly snatched away" by such an action.

The former Congress president also alleged that Prime Minister Narendra Modi is "attacking the Constitution by recruiting public

servants through the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh instead of the Union Public Service Commission". Gandhi's attack came after it emerged that 45 specialists would soon join key posts of joint secretaries, directors and deputy secretaries in different central ministries.

Usually, such posts are manned by the officers of all-India services -- the Indian Administrative Service (IAS), Indian Police Service (IPS) and Indian Forest Service (IFoS) -- and Group A services, among others.



"Reservation of SC, ST and OBC classes is being openly snatched away by recruiting

# Will raise division issues in RS: Singhvi

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The Congress candidate for the Rajya Sabha by-poll from Telangana state, Abhishek Manu Singhvi, assured that he will raise the Telangana Division issues in the Rajya Sabha.

Singhvi said that he is happy to contest Rajya Sabha elections from Telangana and that he will file his nomination papers on Monday along with state leaders. He said that he has the full support of the Telangana Congress party leadership. Earlier, Singhvi paid a courtesy



call to Telangana Government advisor (Public Affairs) K. Keshava Rao, Irrigation Minister N. Uttam Kumar Reddy.

**'Enhance security in hospitals'**  
 Junior docs meet women's panel chief

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Female junior doctors in Telangana, who are protesting over the alleged rape and murder of a woman doctor in Kolkata, on Sunday met the state Women's Commission Chairperson Nerella Sharada and urged her to take steps, including installation of CCTV cameras in hospitals, to enhance security for women medical personnel. Speaking to reporters after the meeting, a representative of the women doctors said CCTV cameras should be established in government hospitals and medical colleges and that a team should monitor the CCTV footage.

# KOLKATA RAPE-MURDER CASE

# SC takes cognisance of incident, hearing tomorrow

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court has taken suo motu cognisance of the alleged rape and murder of a postgraduate trainee doctor at the RG Kar Medical College and Hospital in Kolkata, and will hear the case on August 20.

According to the cause list of August 20 uploaded on the apex court website, a bench comprising Chief Justice D Y Chandrachud and Justices J B Pardiwala and Manoj Misra is sched-



uled to hear on Tuesday a matter titled 'In Re: Alleged rape and murder incident of a trainee doctor in RG Kar Medical College and Hospital, Kolkata and related issue'. The alleged rape and murder of the junior doctor in a seminar hall of the state-run hospital has sparked nationwide protests.

# LEADERSHIP QUALITIES

# Americans give Harris an advantage over Trump



PNS ■ WASHINGTON

Vice President Kamala Harris has a perceived advantage over former President Donald Trump on several leadership qualities such as hon-

**Nearly half of Americans say that "committed to democracy" and "disciplined" are attributes that better describe Harris**

esty, a new poll from The Associated Press-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research finds, although Americans are slightly more likely to trust Trump on the economy and immigration.

Nearly half of Americans say that "committed to democracy" and "disciplined" are attributes that better describe Harris. About 3 in 10 say these qualities better describe

Trump. About 4 in 10 say Harris is someone who "cares about people like you" while about 3 in 10 say that about Trump. About 4 in 10 say

**Trump has spent the campaign championing himself as a strong leader who is capable of handling tough crises facing the country**

"honest" better describes Harris and 24% say that quality better describes Trump.

Both parties are racing to define Harris as she prepares to accept the Democratic nomination at the



party's convention next week. The poll suggests she carries some of the same baggage that weighed down President Joe Biden before he ended his reelection bid but has advantages over Trump when



# Monday Mirchi

**SIMULTANEOUS ABSENCE OF CM & CS: A RARE SPECTACLE**

You'd be hard-pressed to find another instance where both the Chief Minister and the Chief Secretary simultaneously went on a foreign tour. It's practically a rule that when one is off for the cause of the State, the other stays back to keep the fort secure. But this time, with Revanth Reddy and his entourage, including the Chief Secretary, off to the US, the administrative ship was left without its usual captains. And now, everyone's asking the million-dollar question: Who was steering the ship? Nobody was officially designated to play captain, leaving the whole state wondering if this was a planned experiment in administrative independence - or a classic case of "Oops, we forgot!" Either way, it's got everyone talking and, for some, panicking. Stay tuned as the plot thickens!

**I&PR FALLS SHORT OF EXPECTATIONS DURING US TRIP**

Rumour has it that the recent US visit, which was supposed to be a grand showcase of our State's prowess, hit a bit of a snag - thanks to the I&PR department. Commissioner Hanumanth Rao was expected to make this trip a glittering success, but instead, it seems the department's performance was short of expectations. The grapevine is buzzing with confusion, especially since the Chief Minister's PROs might be new, but the seasoned officers should have had this covered! The government's starting to wonder why this once well-oiled machine is now sputtering. The whispers suggest that this isn't just a minor blip but might lead to a deeper dive into the department's operations. Who knew managing PR could feel like rocket science?

**THE PENDULUM SWINGS FROM DICTATORIAL TO 'TOO MUCH DEMOCRACY'**

The switch from the BRS government to the Congress-led administration has been a bit like watching a pendulum swing wildly from one extreme to the other. From a regime that was accused of being dictatorial, we've now swung to one where democracy seems to be on steroids. Some bureaucrats are starting to feel the pinch, with one lamenting, "We've gone from too much dic-

tatorship to too much democracy. Honestly, too much of anything isn't good!" It turns out that when everyone gets a say, things slow down - considerably. The new government's next challenge? Figuring out how to turn down the volume on all those voices so they can get something done!

**A TALE OF TWO THEORIES: BABUS DIVIDED OVER SOMESH'S GST ROW**

Somesh Kumar's Rs 1400 crore GST-related controversy is the latest hot topic in bureaucratic circles, and opinions are as split as a poorly assembled jigsaw puzzle. Some officials are brushing it off as a storm in a teacup, chalking it up to Somesh Kumar's love for micromanagement. Others, however, are buzzing with talk that TK Sreedevi's recent transfer might be connected to the scandal. But hold on - yours truly has caught wind of a different tale: Sreedevi's move might have more to do with her unique management style, which rubbed some people the wrong way. As the drama unfolds, one thing's for sure - Somesh Kumar seems unfazed, happily celebrating the second edition of his book *Methods for Community Participation: A Complete Guide for Practitioners Book*, while the rest of us are left wondering what's really going on!

**IPS DILEMMA: CAUGHT IN THE CROSSFIRE OF SHIFTING POLITICAL WINDS**

If you thought school detention was rough, wait till you hear about the latest punishment doled out to some senior IPS officers. In a plot twist straight out of a bureaucratic soap opera, several officers have applied for mass leave after being caught in the crossfire of shifting political winds. You see, their close ties with the previous government didn't sit well with the new bosses, leading to their transfer to 'insignificant' posts. But the real kicker? The Andhra Pradesh DGP has now ordered these officers to report to HQ at 10 am sharp, sign the attendance register, and then - brace yourself - sit in the waiting room doing nothing till 5 pm. It's like a time-out for grown-ups! Not surprisingly, all 16 officers have decided to take a leave of absence. Can you blame them?

- Yours truly

# Oppn disturbing farmers with campaign of lies, says Tummala

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Agriculture Minister Tummala Nageshwara Rao said that in the last four days opposition leaders have been engaged in social media maneuvers and disturbing farmers with their campaign of lies.

He said that seeing the growing trust of the people in the Congress and the schemes being implemented by the Congress government, the opposition is now fighting for survival.

In a statement issued on



Sunday, Tummala said that BRS leaders have lost the confidence of farmers as they failed to waive loans amounting to Rs 1 lakh for even half the farmers. The BJP has never

even thought of a farm loan waiver scheme in any of the states they are in power, he added.

The government waived loans amounting up to Rs 2 lakh before the first crop and as the process is going on they are spewing venom at the Congress government, he said.

It is the Congress government's responsibility to waive farm loans according to eligibility, Tummala said.

So far the government has applied the scheme to all farmers whose family verification

has been done, he said.

"We are also collecting details of farmers whose bank data is incorrect. We asked bankers to grant new loans to farmers who got loan waivers. We are also giving you loan waiver details of former governments as evidence of the performance of this government. I hope that at least the leaders of the BRS government will introspect to what extent they benefited from the half-implemented loan waiver when they were in power and behave soberly," he said.

# CM extends Rakhi greetings to women

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Chief Minister Revanth Reddy extended his greetings to women on the occasion of Rakhi festival. The Chief Minister hoped that the Rakhi festival, which symbolises the bond between a brother and sister would be celebrated with great joy.

The 'people's government' has been implementing schemes to empower women. The government has already provided free bus travel for women, cooking gas cylinders for Rs 500 and free power supply of up to 200 units, the CM said.

# Lateral entries were done without any process during UPA era: BJP

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The BJP on Sunday asked Congress leader Rahul Gandhi to stop lying after he claimed that the government's move to recruit public servants through lateral entry would take away the reservation for SCs, STs and OBCs.

In a post on X, BJP IT department head Amit Malviya said the truth is that such lateral recruitments used to be done without any process during the Congress-led United Progressive Alliance's rule.

"By eliminating that ad-hocism, the government of India has now ensured that lateral entries are made on the basis of established guidelines so that there is no impact on the quota and reservation system," he asserted.

Malviya cited the official memorandum issued by the Department of Personnel and Training (DoPT) in 2016 which stipulated that lateral recruitments must follow the reservation roster and maintain the prescribed ratio for SC, ST, OBC and persons with disability candidates.

He referred to another DoPT memorandum issued in 2019 which reiterated that lateral entries should be according to the reservation policy and roster maintenance.

The BJP leader also cited an office memorandum issued by the Union home ministry in 2020 that emphasised the need for strict adherence to the reservation guidelines in lateral entries.

"Due to the above provisions, all the legal provisions and reservation rules which

apply to the officers selected through any other selection process of UPSC (Union Public Service Commission) will also be applicable on lateral entries," he said and asked Gandhi to "stop lying".

"How many times does one have to explain the same thing to 'balak buddhi'," Malviya said, taking a swipe at the Congress leader.

He alleged that a similar attempt was made to spread confusion on the issue in 2018 as well.

"But when questions were raised on some prominent lateral entrants like Dr Manmohan Singh and Montek Singh Ahluwalia", the Congress was left stunned, he said. "The truth is that earlier the Congress used to recruit such lateral entrants without any process."



CM Revanth Reddy addressing the CLP meeting at Hotel Sheraton on Sunday

# CM Revanth defends Singhvi's candidature

Manu to file RS nomination papers today

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Defending the candidature of Abhishek Manu Singhvi in the Rajya Sabha by-poll from Telangana, Chief Minister Revanth Reddy said that there is a need to argue strongly in the Legislative Houses as well as the Supreme Court regarding the State Reorganisation Act and that is why the Telangana Congress requested the high command to send legal expert Abhishek Manu Singhvi to the Rajya Sabha from Telangana.

The Centre is not implementing the State Reorganisation Act-2014, the CM said and added that many constitutional and legal complications have arisen in implementing the State Reorganisation Act.

The CM thanked the high command for approving the candidature of Abhishek Manu Singhvi from Telangana immediately after his name was proposed.

The CM said Singhvi strongly advocated the resolution of unresolved issues of the State Reorganisation Act in legislatures and courts. He said former MP K. Keshava Rao acted as a disciplined

Congress worker with a big heart. The Congress Legislature Party (CLP) meeting was held at Hotel Sheraton in Nanakramguda on Sunday. The Chief Minister introduced Abhishek Manu Singhvi to the MLAs. The Deputy Chief Minister Mallu Bhatti Vikramarka, Ministers, MLAs and MLCs attended.

**'Good for Telangana'**

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Irrigation Minister N. Uttam Kumar Reddy said that sending Abhishek Manu Singhvi to the Rajya Sabha from Telangana will be good for Telangana.

Speaking to the media after the CLP meeting held at the Sheraton Hotel on Sunday, he said that Singhvi is a prominent Supreme Court lawyer who argued in the Supreme Court regarding Telangana state.

Abhishek Manu Singhvi is one of the leading lawyers in India, he said.

Singhvi's father Ellen Singhvi was the Indian.

# New case filed against Sheikh Hasina over murder of two students

PNS ■ DHAKA

Another murder case was filed on Sunday against Bangladesh's deposed prime minister Sheikh Hasina over the death of two college students during the recent anti-quota protests in the country.

It was the latest in the slew of cases filed against the 76-year-old former premier, who resigned and fled to India on August 5 following a massive protest by students against a controversial quota system in government jobs.

The case was filed against Hasina and 12 others over the murder of two students in Dhaka's Sutrapur area during the violence that led to her ouster. It was filed with the court of Dhaka Metropolitan



Magistrate Torikul Islam over the killing of Kobi Nazrul Govt College student Ikram Hossain Kawser and Shaheed Suhrawardi College student Omar Faruk, state-run BSS news agency reported.

The two students were gunned down in separate incidents by police and the Awami League supporters as they were staging protests along with

hundreds of others in front of the Kobi Nazrul Govt College and Shaheed Suhrawardi College on July 19.

This takes the tally of cases filed against Hasina to 12, including nine for murder, one for abduction, and two for committing crimes against humanity and genocide in Bangladesh. Over 230 people were killed in the incidents of violence that erupted across the country following the fall of the Hasina-led Awami League government, taking the death toll to more than 600 since the massive protest by students first started in mid-July. The other accused in the case include Awami League General Secretary and former minister Obaidul Quader, Dhaka South City Corporation.

# Sri Lankan President Wickremesinghe calls for deepening ties with India

PNS ■ COLOMBO

Sri Lankan President Ranil Wickremesinghe has emphasised the importance of strengthening economic cooperation and regional integration with Japan to India, with a special focus on deepening ties with New Delhi, as his country seeks to emerge from bankruptcy.

Wickremesinghe's comments came as he was virtually addressing the Head of State Session of the 3rd Voice of Global South Summit, held under the theme "An Empowered Global South for a Sustainable Future." From the north-central town of Anuradhapura yesterday.

The conference, chaired by Indian Prime Minister

Narendra Modi, brought together heads of state from various countries.

Reflecting on Indo-Sri Lankan relations, the President emphasised the "vision" statement shared between the two nations, which celebrates their historical cooperation and lays the foundation for future collaboration.

He expressed optimism that this vision will lead to stronger integration between Sri Lanka and India across various sectors.

President Wickremesinghe highlighted Sri Lanka's strategic commitment to expanding economic partnerships across Asia, particularly through the Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and

Economic Cooperation (BIM-STEC).

The President noted that as the Bay of Bengal region emerges as a hub of economic growth, the significance of BIMSTEC continues to rise.

Sri Lanka, as a member, seeks closer economic integration with India and is exploring economic cooperation agreements extending from Japan to India, his office said in a statement.

President Wickremesinghe also expressed his gratitude to Prime Minister Modi and

the people of India for their support during Sri Lanka's recent economic crisis. The President acknowledged that India's assistance played a vital role in helping Sri Lanka.

# Condemning crime is okay, we need solution

PNS ■ MUMBAI

Veteran actor Neena Gupta has said there is a need to come up with solutions to ensure women's safety, as she condemned the alleged rape and murder of a postgraduate trainee doctor at the state-run RG Kar Medical College and Hospital in Kolkata last week. Over the

last few days, the actor said, she has mullied a lot on the issue of women's safety.

"Condemning it (the crime) is okay, but we need a solution. What could the solution be? Ours is a large country. Every state, district, region or village will have committees where they (women) work, do surveillance and file a report.

# Refix ties with Dhaka

PNS ■ DHAKA

India will benefit if it supports the current transition government in Bangladesh and moves to build relationships with other political parties instead of "focussing on one person and party", political analysts, foreign relations and security experts said on Sunday. After the ouster of Prime

Minister Sheikh Hasina, Nobel laureate Muhammad Yunus, 84, took oath as the Chief Adviser of the interim government on August 8 amid violence and chaos. Hasina, 76, fled to India on August 5 after she was forced to resign following a massive protest by students against a quota system in government jobs.

# Who will be held accountable if Mullaperiyar Dam collapses: Suresh Gopi

PNS ■ THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

Union Minister Suresh Gopi on Sunday expressed concern about the safety of Mullaperiyar Dam and sought to know who would take the responsibility if the 125-year-old dam collapses. He

asked whether the courts that pronounce verdicts to maintain the status quo or the authorities who obtain such verdicts from the judiciary would be held accountable if such a disaster happens. The minister of state for petroleum and natural gas as

well as tourism shared his concern while speaking during a function here.

During the speech, he mentioned that he came across a Facebook post raising concern about the safety of Mullaperiyar Dam.

**TODAY ALMANAC**

**Month & Paksham:** Sukla Paksha  
 Triti: Purnima: Aug 19 03:05 AM to Aug 19 11:55 PM  
 Krishna Paksha  
 Pratipada: Aug 19 11:55 PM to Aug 20 08:33 PM

**Nakshatram:**  
 Shravana: Aug 18 10:14 AM to Aug 19 08:10 AM  
 Dhanishta: Aug 19 08:10 AM to Aug 20 05:45 AM  
 Rahukalam: 7:37 AM to 9:11 AM  
 Yamagandam: 10:45 AM to 12:19 PM  
 Varjyam: 12:10 PM to 01:36 PM  
 Gulika: 1:53 PM to 3:27 PM  
 Amritakalam: 08:24 PM to 09:50 PM  
 Abhijit Muhurtham: 11:54 AM to 12:44 PM

**HYDERABAD WEATHER**

**Forecast:** Scattered Thunderstorms  
 Temp: 31°C  
 Humidity: 76%  
 Sunrise: 6:00 AM  
 Sunset: 6:39 PM  
 Updated: August 18, 2024 5:00 PM

# Fortunate to have worked with exceptional people: Somanath

PNS ■ KOLKATA

Describing himself as a 100 per cent 'Made in India' product, ISRO chairman S Somanath on Sunday said the skills he acquired were derived from his experience at the Indian space agency. Somanath, who was awarded the Special Life Fellow Award by IIT Kharagpur on its 74th foundation day, reflected on his years at ISRO, crediting his achievements, including Chandrayaan-3, to the great people and leaders he has worked with.

"Our work over the past 38 years, including my own, has focused on building key capa-



bilities within this organisation. I am fortunate to have worked with exceptional people, motivators, and leaders who have shaped the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) into what it is today. I have had the opportunity to follow in their footsteps and contribute to projects like Chandrayaan-3 that make us

all proud," Somanath said. Addressing the students and faculty of the premier institute, he said, "What you are achieving as an institution is commendable, and it is crucial for ISRO and other scientific organisations, both in this country and globally, to maintain a strong connection with you. There is a great vision ahead for all of us in ISRO and I will like you to be a part of it as well."

DRDO chairman S Kamat emphasised that success in organisations like ISRO and DRDO is due to collective efforts and teamwork, not just individual contributions.

He highlighted the nation's transformation goals set by

Prime Minister Narendra Modi, urging collaboration among academia, industry, and R&D organisations to achieve technological leadership and innovation.

"We are on the brink of national transformation. The Prime Minister has challenged us to become a developed country by 2047 and to emerge as a technology leader. This can only be achieved if academia, industry, and R&D organisations collaborate and develop cutting-edge, world-first technologies. Given the current momentum in our country, I am confident that we will achieve this goal even before," Kamat.

# Public outcry over video of elephant set ablaze by villagers

PNS ■ KOLKATA

A viral video showing a wild female elephant being set ablaze by villagers in West Bengal's Jhargram has sparked outrage on social media.

The elephant, reportedly pregnant according to some netizens, is seen writhing in pain after flaming iron nails were thrown at it from a nearby house. The video concludes with the elephant succumbing to its burns on the road.

While Forest Minister Birbaha Hansda could not be reached for comment, a senior forest official told PTI, "We have heard about the incident and seen the video. We are looking into the matter."

Director Tathagata Mukherjee, who made the



film 'Pariah' about abuse of street dogs, shared the video on Facebook, saying, "In the constituency of the forest minister, a pregnant elephant has been murdered by a private hula party (local civilians tasked with managing wild ele-

phants). Everyone is silent." Actor Srilekha Mitra also expressed her distress on Facebook, saying, "Are we moving towards destruction? I can't tolerate such violence and aggression towards animals."





**World Photography Day**

The State Information and Public Relations department to organize World Photography Day. Minister for Information and Public Relations Ponguleti Srinivas Reddy to be the chief guest. Media Academy president Srinivas Reddy, I&PR Commissioner Hanumantha Rao and CPRO at CMO Ayodhya Reddy to attend.

**Venue**

Green Park Hotel Secunderabad. Monday, August 19, 10 am

**DIGITAL ART DIGITAL CULTURE**

"Fantasy" showcases some of Bakkali's masterpieces through print, augmented reality and immersive art

**Venue**

Alliance Francaise Library, Hyderabad Till August 31 11 am to 4.30 pm (Tue- Fri)

**Raahat**

Crisis centre for domestic violence and abuse. British Deputy High Commissioner to India, Christina Scott will be the chief guest for the inaugural event, while British Deputy High Commissioner to Telangana and AP, Gareth Wynn Owen will be the guest of honour.

**Venue**

Conference Hall, Dr LJP Block, Adj. Fernandez Hospital, Bogulkunta, Hyderabad. 11 am, Thursday, August 22.

**Swayambhar Naari**

Seven-day Handicrafts Exhibition by Swayambhar Naari, a voluntary group from Shantiniketan/West Bengal to provide marketing support to poor artisans. The exhibition is an effort to revive Jamdani tribal weaving, metallic tissue silk, bamboo Jamdani and premium Handlooms. Silk, Tassar, cotton sarees, exclusive Kantha sarees, grass mats, jewellery, Batik bedsheets, leather and sea shell products.

**Venue**

YMCA, Narayanguda from August 23 to 29

# City Pioneer



HYDERABAD | MONDAY | AUGUST 19, 2024

03

**MARKETS ABUZZ WITH BUYING SPREE**

## New varieties of rakhis grab customers' attention



Over the period of time, rakhis have evolved from simple sacred red thread to gold or silver made rakhis which one can find on online jewellery sites. Despite being expensive, these rakhis have witnessed huge demand from the customers, the price of which varies from Rs 700 and above.

**PNS ■ HYDERABAD**

Ahead of Raksha Bandhan, the markets are abuzz with various varieties of colourful rakhis, including eco-friendly ones.

Over the period of time, rakhis have evolved from simple sacred red thread to gold or silver made rakhis which one can find on online jewellery sites. Despite being expensive, these rakhis have witnessed huge demand from the customers, the price of which varies from Rs 700 and above. With regards to creative and colourful rakhi threads, the prices vary from Rs 3 to Rs 600, depending on the design and material they are made up of. Speaking to Pioneer Correspondent, Teja, a rakhi seller, said, "Just like previous year, this year the prices are same but some new designs came into the market, such as to avoid negative energy; evil eye rakhis are becoming a trend, followed by

floral rakhis, animated rakhis, watch-like rakhis and many more. Customers prefer new varieties and they are willing to buy above Rs 100. The prices are pocket-friendly."

Santhoshi, a customer said, "The prices of rakhis are almost the same as every year, but with the new designs coming into the market, we are able to buy them at the lowest or pocket-friendly rates." Rithika, another customer

said, "The prices and designs are almost the same; just like every year. There is not much difference in regards to designs and prices."

"At Begum Bazaar, there are around 200 shops that sell rakhi every year. Even this year, there are huge lines in front of the shops. We are struggling to handle the customers," said Jawahar Shah, owner of New Bombay Kangan Hall.

### Sisters expect more than gifts

As the city celebrates Raksha Bandhan, sisters are expecting more than just gifts and chocolates. With rising violence and crime against women, they are urging their brothers to be a source of protection and support. When asked, Pavani, a degree student from Anand Nagar, expressed her fears regarding the increasing crimes and rapes this year, across the country. She feels that girls are now living in fear. She said that brothers often tie the rakhi and remember its significance for only a month. She emphasised that brothers should remain strong and supportive, especially in these insecure times. Pavani added that if the true meaning of Raksha Bandhan is to safeguard girls against crimes. However, many men treat it as just another festival being caring just for few days, leaving girls to face challenges alone. Pavani mentioned that even in a metropolitan city like Hyderabad, women still face harassment. Meanwhile, Nandhini, a master's student from Khairatabad, agreed with Pavani. She noted that many brothers now focus more on giving gifts and money, than understanding the potential care. She said that this sister-brother festival should be more about ensuring that brothers are there to protect their sisters. Nandhini urged brothers to be vigilant and protective as violence and hatred are spreading.

## Girl lauded for drug free nation campaign

**PNS ■ HYDERABAD**

A twelve-year-old girl student got all praise for raising awareness on drug-free nation.

Taniya Begum, studying at All Saints High School, Hyderabad, is conducting awareness with her campaign on drug-free nation.

Sandeep Sandilya, Director of the Telangana Anti-Narcotics Bureau, congratulated Taniya Begum for her initiative.

As the youngest Junior Campaign Head of Drug-Free World, Tania is an inspiration to her generation. Sandeep Sandilya expressed his deep concern over the growing issue of drug addiction, particularly among the youth, who



are the future of the country. He emphasised the urgent need to eradicate drugs entirely, urging both the government and the public to come together in this mission.

Tania Begum highlighted the importance of reaching out to the public with awareness programmes to save people from the devastating effects of drug abuse.

## Guv releases Gowd's book 'Miles of Smiles'

**PNS ■ HYDERABAD**

Governor of Telangana Jishnu Dev Varma released the book 'Miles of Smiles' by Dr MS Gowd at Raj Bhavan on Sunday. The Governor commended Dr Gowd for his long and distinguished career in dentistry.

Dr Gowd is a well-known dentist with over 50 years of practice. He was recognised as one of the top 100 health professionals in the world by the



Governor of Telangana Jishnu Dev Varma releasing the book 'Miles of Smiles' by Dr MS Gowd at Raj Bhavan on Sunday

International Biographical Centre, Cambridge, in 2013. He has made significant contribution to dentistry in Telangana and Andhra Pradesh, including introducing cosmetic dentistry,

dental lasers and dental implants.

Dr Gowd has authored eight books in multiple languages, helping the public understand dental health better. His latest book, 'Miles of Smiles' continues his mission to improve dental care through advanced technologies.

The event was attended by retired IAS officer KV Ramana Chary, Dr Gowd's family and senior officials of Raj Bhavan.

## Operation Dhoolpet: Cops eliminate drugs selling points

- ◆ Gudumba-free Dhoolpet declared on October 2, 2016
- ◆ Then it slowly turned from illicit liquor to ganja adda
- ◆ A special team led by N Anji Reddy is conducting extensive raids
- ◆ Operations led peddlers to keep ganja out of Dhoolpet

**PNS ■ HYDERABAD**

The excise police targeted to eliminate drugs from Dhoolpet before August 31. They said that they already eliminated selling points in the area. The extensive raids and searches in that area led peddlers to store ganja in other areas.

Initially, the police conducted raids at suspicious places and arrested people. During that time police received a backlash from the people as some persons misled them. But the police created awareness on drug nuisance and their well-being. They shared videos, including those of the WhatsApp community groups.



Excise police display the seized ganja bundles in Dhoolpet

Then, the police went in the guise of customers to find out about the selling areas and arrested the sellers. Excise Superintendent of Police N Anji Reddy said, "In this way, the excise police have eliminated the dark spots in Dhoolpet. Because of the operations, we observed

that sellers were scared of carrying out the illicit trade."

The population of the Dhoolpet is around 15,000, but peddlers are less than 200. In every excise police station, CI is the Station House Officer (SHO), but for the Dhoolpet station, Assistant Excise

Superintendent of Police is the SHO. Since the Operation Dhoolpet started in July 2024, the excise police of Dhoolpet arrested more than 72 people and seized 14 vehicles in 27 cases.

"Now people are not selling ganja in Dhoolpet. Compared to the previous months, peddlers are not selling much in Dhoolpet area. Instead, they are supplying ganja to customers by receiving orders through phone calls. But the police are tracing customers by their payment history chat and confession of the accused. Based on that we are issuing notices to customers under 27 (b) of the NDPS Act," the officials said.

## 2 arrested, 1.07 kgs of ganja seized

**PNS ■ HYDERABAD**

The Excise State Task Team, along with Excise Dhoolpet team, on Sunday detected one ganja case at Dhoolpet and arrested two persons. In all, 1.07 kgs of ganja, one motorbike and three mobile phones were seized.



On reliable information, Police conducted vehicle checks at Lodha Bhavan Road leading from

Hajari Hotel to Ganga Bowli. During the raids, Police arrested seller Naveen Singh and peddler Goutham Singh of

Bhaskar Reddy, Sreedhar and other officials under the supervision of Excise Superintendent of Police N Anji Reddy.

## No action on demolished mosque: MBT spokesperson

**PNS ■ HYDERABAD**

The reconstruction of the historic mosque in Moinabad, which was recently demolished, is yet to

Osmania University hostel.

"Due to the lack of that you being a secular Chief of a hostel inside the Minister, there has been no state-ment from you condemning the act of demolitions of a campus hostel, as private hostels are very expensive. Also, we are facing a lot of hardship travelling daily from the OU hostel to our campus. We have raised our voices for years, but no action was taken by the State government," said Radhika (name changed), a final-year Chemistry student.

begin, according to Majlis Bachao Tahreek (MBT) spokesperson Amjed Ullah Khan.

A delegation of Muslim religious scholars, social activists and MBT activists is yet to get permission to submit a memorandum to the Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy. The Masjid-e-Jagirdar in Moinabad was demolished on July 22 by some anti-social elements. Later, Moinabad Police registered a case and the Telangana State Wakf Board has also promised that a masjid will be re-constructed at its original place. Amjed Ullah Khans said, "It has been three weeks. We are very sad that you being a secular Chief of a hostel inside the Minister, there has been no state-ment from you condemning the act of demolitions of a campus hostel, as private hostels are very expensive. Also, we are facing a lot of hardship travelling daily from the OU hostel to our campus. We have raised our voices for years, but no action was taken by the State government," said Radhika (name changed), a final-year Chemistry student.

## HYDRAA demolishes illegal structures at Gandipet

**PNS ■ HYDERABAD**

Hyderabad Disaster Response and Assets Protection Agency (HYDRAA) demolished illegal structures at Gandipet Full Tank Level (FTL) on Sunday. More than 10 structures were demolished from early in the morning to late night.

After conducting an inquiry of the constructions on FTL lands, officials conducted the demolition drive, in the presence of the municipal, revenue, Water Board and police officials.

In 2009, a sarpanch of the local gram panchayat granted permission for people to construct houses in the name of the gram panchayat. HYDRAA Commissioner Ranganath identified that the sarpanch is still granting building permits with old dates to people.

"It is illegal and action will be taken against people who



HYDRAA conducting demolitions at Gandipet FTL lands on Sunday

issue building permits on old dates. People should take permits from local municipal authorities for building construction as per existing municipal regulations," Ranganath added.

HYDRAA Commissioner advised people not to build houses in FTL and buffer zones with fake documents and expired permits and not to buy lands in those areas.

## Young students display creative talent at IITH Fair



Students displaying their talent at the IITH Fair on Sunday

**PNS ■ HYDERABAD**

The Indian Institute of Technology Hyderabad (IITH) concluded the second 'Future Inventors Fair' (FIF) on Sunday. This event aimed at nurturing the creativity and innovation of young students in Telangana. The fair featured students from Class 8 and 9, who showcased their projects and ideas. A total of 18 schools participated in the final round.

The event included a diverse range of projects, reflecting the students' creativity and technical skills. The highlight was the prize distribution, where the top three projects were recognised. Niharika and Shivangi from Army Public School, Bolarum, won the first prize of Rs 20,000 for their 'Anti-Sleep Detector' project. The second prize of Rs 10,000 went to Swastikesha and T Lakshay from Hyderabad Public School, Ramamthapur, for 'Dynamic Temperature Management.' The third prize of Rs 5,000 was awarded to Ridhiman Singh, Mayur and Aananya Pakki from St Andrews High School, Sutchitra, for 'Microalgae For Sustainable Air Purification.'

Director, IIT Hyderabad, Prof. BS Murty said, "I extend my heartfelt congratulations to all participants and winners and look forward to continuing their mission of creating innovation and excellence in the years to come."

In addition to cash prizes, the winners were offered internships with IIT Hyderabad faculty. This opportunity will allow them to gain valuable research experience, encouraging their passion for science and technology.

## Mass promotions in TGSPDCL

**PNS ■ HYDERABAD**

A total of 2,263 employees in the Southern Power Distribution Company of Telangana Limited (TGSPDCL) received long-awaited promotions on Sunday. This is the first time in the company's history that so many promotions were given in one day.

Chairman and Managing Director Musharraf Faruqi issued the promotion orders. The promotions include 101 in engineering services, 47 in Accounts, 2,099 in O&M Services and 16 in P&G Services. These employees had been waiting for the promotions since 2017.

Deputy Chief Minister Mallu Bhatti Vikramarka, after learning about the delay in promotions on August 8, directed immediate action. As a result, promotions were finally approved after a wait of nearly 7.5 years. Many employees had retired without receiving their promotions, but now, vacancies created by these promotions will be filled as per the State government's orders.

## Inadequate facilities plague Mahila Visvavidyalayam students

**RASHMI BHUMIREDDY**  
bhumireddy.rashmi@gmail.com  
■ HYDERABAD

Stepping into the Telangana Mahila Visvavidyalayam, one can witness the dilapidated state of departments, especially science-related departments, no proper waste disposal, non-functioning toilets and many more.

The varsity, which is known for its historic recognition, has not seen the light of renovation and development work. Apart from that, there is no proper regular teaching and non-teaching faculty, and the need for more classrooms for 6,000+ students grappled the university into the shadows. As you tour around the campus, you will come across many departments and libraries that have been in bad condition for

ages. What's shocking is that there is no full-fledged auditorium for this historic institution. The students stated that any college events, such as festivals, celebrations, etc., are hosted outside the main building, which is surrounded by a lush green garden. They have an Esro hall, which can hardly accommodate 400 people at a time.

In an interview with the Pioneer correspondent, the officials said, "Despite expressing our concerns to multiple media outlets, the Telangana government has not addressed our issues." Our first demand is that the government release funds to us on time so that we can renovate the crumbling department blocks, hiring regular and non-teaching faculty and so on, and to give us the certificate for recognising the institution as a

women's university. Apart from that, we need more classrooms for 6,000+ students. We are planning to introduce new courses that include BA Fashion Design and Technology, MSC Data Science and MSC Food Science courses, but due to a lack of sources, we didn't launch them. Till now, only 25 members are permanent teaching staff, while the remaining staff is recruited on an outsourcing basis, and there is need for 217 permanent staff. In the case of non-teaching staff, we have only 44 members, and there is also a requirement of 384 non-teaching staff. There are 96 classrooms and we need 10 to 12 classrooms."

A few students alleged that despite the college having been upgraded into a women's university, it lacks all the facilities a university should have. The main concern is that the university does not have a hostel, and due to that, many students are forced to reside in the





## Rabid dog bites 7 persons in Mulugu district

PNS ■ MULUGU

A rabid dog went berserk and bit at least seven pedestrians at Nuguru village under Venkatapuram mandal in the district on Sunday morning.

It pounced on the passersby and bit them. It did not even spare the goats moving on the road. As if it is not enough, it barged into homes and bit women, including old women. The dog barged into the house of one Peddi Lakshmaiah. When he tried to defend himself with his bare hands, the dog bit his hands causing nerve damage.

He, along with Indla Venkatesulu, were given first-aid at the hospital in Venkatapuram and were rushed in an ambulance to Yeturunagaram for further treatment. Lakshmaiah, who bled profusely, was later transferred to district hospital at Mulugu.

Mulugu District Medical and Health officer Dr Appayya said that the patients would be provided quality healthcare.

# CM striving to make Telangana a role model State: Ponguleti

PNS ■ WARANGAL

Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy has been striving to make Telangana a role model for other States, said Revenue Minister Ponguleti Srinivas Reddy.

He was laying the foundation for a government degree college to be building to be built at a cost of Rs11.75 crore at in Parkal in Hanamkonda district. He also held a review meeting with officials on Parkal Municipality development.

Speaking to the media persons on the occasion, Srinivas Reddy stated that the Chief Minister recently visited the United States of America and South Korea to secure foreign direct investments for the development of the State.

CM Revanth Reddy particularly focused on the textile park in Warangal district. The Chief Minister invited enterprises from South Korea to ensure the textile park gets a much-needed boost. The textile park would become a reality very soon, he said.

The Minister assured farmers that compensation for the lands acquired for building Greenfield Highways would be paid without



Revenue Minister Ponguleti Srinivas Reddy speaking to the media in Hanamkonda on Sunday

delay. He accused the previous BRS government of neglecting Konaimakula Lift Irrigation. Late chief minister YS Rajasekhara Reddy accorded administrative sanction for the project. The Congress government, he said, would build the project.

The Congress government

would ensure that the 100-bed hospital at Parakala would be built within a month. The Congress government recruited 31,000 eligible candidates through the Telangana Public Service Commission (TPSC). The Congress government fulfilled its promise of waiving crop loans up to Rs 2 lakh. The

Congress government is committed to ensuring the all-round development of the State.

Lok Sabha member Kadiyav Kavya, MLA Revoori Prakash Reddy, Hanamkonda, warangal district Collectors P Pravina and Satya Sarada and others were present.



## Narrow escape for 100 passengers as bus tyres come off

PNS ■ JAGTIAL

More than 100 persons, majority of them being women, had a miraculous escape when the RTC bus in which they were travelling came to a halt after the two rear tyres of the bus came off wheel hub on outskirts of Morapalli in the district on Sunday. Passengers heaved a sigh of relief as alert driver managed to bring the bus to stop.

However, none was injured in the incident as the bus driver tactfully controlled the bus. Ever since the Mahalakshmi scheme was introduced, the occupancy ration in the buses has increased to more than 100 per cent.

Officials boast of the success of the Mahalakshmi scheme, but the fact is that there are inadequate number of buses to meet the Mahalakshmi challenge.

Some accounts say that there are at least 170 passengers in the buses when two rear tyres of the bus came off the wheel hub.

The PalleVelugu bus of Nirmal Depot, which was on its way from Jagtial to Nirmal, the rear tyres of the bus came off all of a sudden, dragging the bus for some distance with a loud noise. A major disaster was averted as the alert driver managed to bring the bus to a halt. The incident took place the moment the bus reached Morapalli outskirts.

With more than 100 commuters boarding the bus, the rear tyres broke loose and got detached while the bus was in motion. But, no passenger was injured due to the alertness and tactfulness of the driver. Otherwise, the bus would have met with a disastrous accident with heavy casualties.

In a twitter message, KTR said there were 170 passengers when the bus met with the accident. He demanded the state government to increase the number of buses. The locals attribute the accident to lack of maintenance also.



## NON-PAYMENT OF SALARY

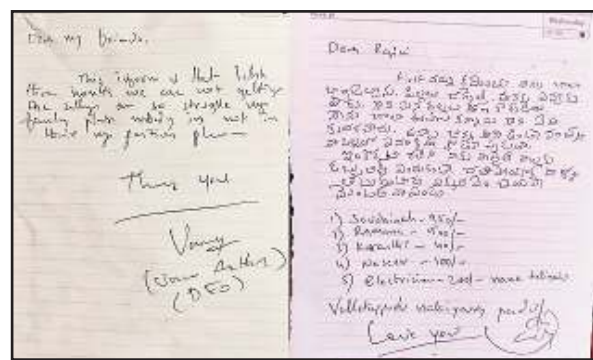
### Heartbroken outsourced worker ends life

PNS ■ SURYAPET

An outsourced worker at the District Headquarters Hospital here committed suicide as he was distressed over non-payment of salaries for three months. The incident happened on Saturday.

The deceased was identified as Wasim.

In a suicide note purportedly written by Wasim, he said that he was unable to take care of his family. Addressing a note to his wife Rajni, Wasim expressed



regrets for subjecting his family to agony.

The deceased urged his wife to repay loans worth Rs 1,790 to various lenders.

In a separate note addressing his friends, Wasim said he was struggling due to non-payment of salary for the last three months and wished that nobody would face such trouble.

Reacting to the incident, BRS working president KT Rama Rao slammed the state government for making tall claims of prompt payment of salaries to all government employees on the first of every month.

He said that Wasim's suicide exposes the lies and utter failure of the Congress government. "Who's responsible for the loss of his life?" he asked.

## Sarvai Papanna Goud stood as symbol of self-respect

PNS ■ RANGAREDDY

Shadnagar MLA Veerlapalli Shankar and former Shadnagar MLA Chaulapalli Pratap Reddy paid tributes to Sardar Sarvai Papanna Goud on the occasion of anniversary celebrations in Shadnagar. The events celebrated Goud's historical significance and contributions to Telangana, with tributes paid at his statue and community activities conducted in his memory.

Former MLA Chaulapalli Pratap Reddy led the tributes by emphasising Sardar Sarvai Papanna Goud's enduring legacy. During the Jayanti celebrations, Pratap Reddy praised Goud as a symbol of Telangana bravery, recounting his rise to prominence. He highlighted Goud's extraordinary courage and his fight against local nobility, who opposed his efforts for justice.

MLA Shankar also paid tributes at the statue of Sardar Sarvai Papanna Goud. In his speech, Shankar praised Goud's role in uniting the poor against royal tyranny and ruling Golconda with



Shadnagar MLA Veerlapalli Shankar and former MLA Chaulapalli Pratap Reddy at the celebrations of Sardar Sarvai Papanna Goud Jayanti in Shadnagar on Sunday

principles of political and social equality. Shankar affirmed that the Congress government, inspired by Goud's values, remained committed to supporting the Gowda community and advancing their interests.

The celebrations included a community service initiative where the Gowda Sangam distributed fruits to

patients at the Town Government Community Hospital, reflecting their dedication to societal welfare. The event saw participation from several notable figures, including former MPPs Shiva Shankar Goud, Vannada Prakash Goud, Rangaiah Goud, Jay Govardhan Goud, and other community leaders.

## Temple Executive Officer in ACB trap

PNS ■ MAHABUBAD

Anti Corruption Bureau (ACB) has trapped an Executive Officer of Sri Musalamma Jathara Temple located in Mahabubad District for accepting bribe from a local shopkeeper on Sunday.

The officer identified as Boguju Bikshama Chary was caught red-handed while allegedly accepting a bribe of Rs 20,000 from the complainant, Nallapu Sambaiah, a local shopkeeper. The bribe was allegedly taken in exchange for not harassing Sambaiah in the operation of his kirana and cool drink shop located within the temple premises.

The bribe money was recovered from Chary's possession, and chemical tests on his right



hand and the cash counter table yielded positive results. Chary has been arrested and will be presented before the Special Court for SPE and ACB cases in Warangal said the ACB release.

## 'All farmers will get loan waiver benefit'

PNS ■ RANGAREDDY

MLA Veerlapalli Shankar on Sunday criticised former minister and BRS MLA T Harish Rao for going back on his promise to resign as MLA if the government fulfilled its promise of waiving farm loan August 15.

Shankar criticised the previous BRS government for

neglecting and in fact that the farmers were mistreated. He recounted a meeting with farmers where issues with the loan waiver were discussed, revealing that some farmers experienced problems due to technical reasons. He assured the farmers that all cultivators would get crop loan waiver benefit. Shankar was addressing a group of farmers at his camp office.

## 4K run flagged off in Warangal, youth urged to stay away from drugs



Warangal City Police Commissioner Amber Kishore Jha speaking at a meeting in Warangal on Sunday

PNS ■ WARANGAL

City police commissioner Amber Kishore Jha has advised youth to stay away drug addiction if they want to be successful in life.

He, along with Warangal and Hanamkonda Districts Collectors Satya Sarada and P Pravina, NPDCL chairman Avinash Reddy and others, flagged 4K run.

The 4K run was organised from police grounds to Adalat Center and returned to the police grounds. College and school students, local youth

participated in the event. An anti-drug oath was administered to the participants prior to flagging off the event. The Chief Guests presented cash rewards to the first three participants in male and female categories.

Amber Kishore Jha, addressing the participants, said that the objective of the police is to achieve drugs-free city. He appealed to people to stay away from the habit of drugs. Use of the drugs or their peddling is a culpable crime. He exhorted them to furnish information about such individuals.

The Warangal District Collector asked them to stay away from drugs for their future and keeping in mind for their good and in the interest of their families.

The Hanamkonda Collector suggested that the people to strive to effect behavioural change among those addicted to drugs.

DCPs Ravinder, Rajamahendra Naik, additional DCPs Ravi, Sanjeev, Suresh Kumar, ACPs, inspectors, RIs, SIs, RSIs, police Kala Jatha teams and others took part in the event.

## HEART-WRENCHING

### 11-year-girl begs for mother's cremation

PNS ■ NIRMAL

In a heart-wrenching incident, an 11-year-old girl resorted to begging with her mother's body. She seems in bewilderment as to how cremate the body of her mother who committed suicide, rendering the girl an orphan.

Some months ago, her father too passed away due to ill-health.

Her pathetic condition brought tears to the eyes of onlookers who came forward to donate money.

The incident took place at Beltaroda village under Tanur mandal in Nirmal district.

No relative turned up and apparently she has none to turn to at this hour of difficulty.

She was seen sitting by the side of her mother's body with tears welling up in her eyes.

Not knowing how to perform the last rites of her mother, she started begging for money from the crowd

that gathered near the body.

A 36-year-old housewife, Gangamani, was estranged from her husband. Sometime ago, her husband passed away due to illness.

May be under pressure from an unfathomable difficulty, Gangamani took the extreme step of committing suicide, rendering her only child Durga an orphan.

Durga was seen crying her heart out for her dear mother. When the crowd that gathered around the body was engaged in discussions on how can the girl perform the last rites, Durga spread a small cloth near the body and started begging for funds. She was seen begging the locals for support.

The locals, moved by her pathetic condition, turned up in large numbers and donated money.

The police said that investigation into suicide is underway.

## BRS gov't strived for economic empowerment of Gowdas

PNS ■ SIDDIPET

Former minister T Harish Rao has said that the BRS government worked hard for the welfare and economic empowerment of Gowdas. The KCR regime took steps to celebrate the birth anniversary and observe death anniversary of Sarvai Papanna officially.

On the occasion of celebrating birth anniversary of Sarvai Papanna here on Sunday, Harish Rao paid rich tributes to him by garlanding statue of Sarvai Papanna. He described Sarvai Papanna as a great fighter who fought for building modern society transcending the borders of narrow caste, religion and other considerations.

He hailed SarvaiPapanna as the Bahujana ruler of the 17th century. The Gowdas have been organizing the birth anniversary celebrations deriving inspiration from SarvaiPapanna.

The KCR regime waived the tree tax for toddy tappers and revived the toddy tappers' societies and reserved 15 per cent of the shops to toddy tappers.

KCR ensured that there no



Former Minister T Harish Rao at the birth anniversary celebration of Sarvai Papanna in Siddipet on Sunday

false cases were foisted on toddy depots by excise department during his 10-year rule.

Earlier, he flagged off a rally by Gowds in the town.

The KCR government established toddy gardens on a large scale. It provided accident insurance to the toddy tappers falling from toddy trees by accident, he said.

However, the Congress gov-

ernment has been foisting false cases on toddy depots to harass the toddy tappers.

Later, he unveiled SarvaiPapanna Goud statue in Nangunurumandal.

Several members of the Goud community, including Marupalli Srinivas Goud, Balkishan Goud, Sai Goud, Rangadhampalli Srinivas Goud, Navin Goud, Ambati Mahesh Goud.



ACROSS THE STATES



Murmu greets people on Raksha Bandhan eve

President Droupadi Murmu on Sunday greeted citizens on the eve of Raksha Bandhan and hoped that the festival enhances respect for women in the society. Raksha Bandhan is a celebration of the unique bond between brothers and sisters, which strengthens the feeling of love and mutual trust, she said. This festival goes beyond religious and cultural boundaries to symbolise the unity in diversity of our country, Murmu said. "This festival strengthens our determination to protect the rights of women. May this festival nurture the spirit of harmony and love, and enhance the respect for women in the society," she was quoted as having said in a message issued by the Rashtrapati Bhavan. The festival will be celebrated on Monday. It is marked by the practice of sisters tying a 'rakhi' on the wrist of their brothers



AIIMS doctor found dead in south Delhi house

A 34-year-old neurosurgeon at AIIMS allegedly committed suicide in his south Delhi house on Sunday, police said. Raj Ghoniya, a resident of Rajkot in Gujarat, died due to a suspected overdose as used vials of medicines and syringes were found in his house in the Gautam Nagar area, police said. A suicide note was also recovered from the spot, however, Ghoniya did not blame anyone in it, they added. "At around 2 pm on Sunday, a PCR call was received at the Hauz Khas police station regarding suicide by a doctor in the Gautam Nagar area. Police reached the spot and found Ghoniya in an unconscious state," a senior police officer said. Ghoniya was taken to the All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) where he was declared dead. He was posted at the Trauma Centre of AIIMS



NE council withdraws draft vision document

Chief Minister N Biren Singh said the North Eastern Council (NEC) has withdrawn its draft Vision 2047 document after it erroneously pointed out that the migration of Kukis was from the 'Chin State of Manipur'. The mistake was identified in chapter 3 of the vision document, which discussed about the migration of ethnic tribes in the northeastern region. In the chapter, it was mentioned that the "Kukis (Chin)" migrated from the 'Chin State of Manipur'. Singh, in a social media post on Saturday, said, "Following the error with the NEC Vision Plan 2047, the issue has been raised with DoNER minister Jyotiraditya M Scindia and it was subsequently withdrawn." Chin state is in neighbouring Myanmar, which shares an international border with Manipur and Mizoram of the northeast region of India.



EAM calls on Kuwaiti PM, Crown Prince; discuss bilateral ties

PNS ■ KUWAIT CITY

External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar on Sunday called on Kuwaiti Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmed Abdullah Al-Ahmed Al-Jaber Al-Sabah and Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Sabah and discussed ways to take the bilateral ties to a higher level. Jaishankar, who arrived here on Sunday on a day-long visit, appreciated Sheikh Ahmed Abdullah's perspectives on the deepening of India-Kuwait ties and conveyed the greetings of Prime



Minister Narendra Modi. Abdullah Al-Ahmed Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, Prime Minister of Kuwait. Conveyed the greet-

ings of PM @narendramodi. Appreciated his perspectives on the deepening of India Kuwait ties. Valued his views in regard to further economic cooperation," Jaishankar said in a post on X. The bilateral ties and ways of boosting cooperation were touched on during the meeting, state-run news agency KUNA reported. Jaishankar earlier called on Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Sabah and sought his insights on taking the bilateral ties to a higher level.

National interest should be paramount : Dhankhar



PNS ■ JAIPUR

Having different views is the "fragrance of the bouquet of democracy" but only till national interest is not sacrificed, Vice President Jagdeep Dhankhar said here on Sunday and asserted that those who prioritise individual and political interests over the country should be "neutralised". He said that if national interest is not kept paramount, then the difference of opinion in politics can become anti-national. He also appealed that people should stop such forces for the development of the nation. "It is not appropriate to forgo national interest for individual and political interests. If the national interest is not kept paramount, then the difference of opinion in politics becomes

anti-national," Dhankhar said. He was addressing an event organised to honour the families of organ donors here. He said people should understand those for whom the nation's interest is paramount and who put political and personal interests above it. "And if they still persist, I urge everyone to neutralise these forces that are pernicious to the growth of this nation," he further said.

**"It is not appropriate to forgo national interest for individual and political interests. If the national interest is not kept paramount, then the difference of opinion in politics becomes anti-national," Dhankhar said**

INDIA bloc will not face any problem

PNS ■ JAMSHEDPUR

Amid speculation that former Jharkhand chief minister Champai Soren could join the BJP, Congress leader Ajoy Kumar on Sunday claimed that the ruling INDIA bloc in the state would not face any problem if the JMM veteran crosses over to the saffron camp.



If Soren switches sides, it would create a fissure among BJP leaders in the state, Kumar said. "The ruling alliance will not have any problem as Jharkhand Chief Minister Hemant Soren will be the face of the INDIA bloc in the assembly poll this year. But this will certainly create a fissure among BJP leaders," the Congress leader said while responding to a query on speculations about Champai Soren. Notably, Champai Soren left for Delhi on Sunday, amid speculations that he is likely to join the BJP, sources said. A close associate of Champai Soren claimed that the former chief minister left for the national capital from Kolkata.

J'khand CM accuses BJP of poaching MLAs

PNS ■ GODDA (JHARKHAND)

Amid speculation that JMM leader Champai Soren could join the BJP, Jharkhand Chief Minister Hemant Soren on Sunday accused the saffron camp of "poaching" MLAs and "dividing society". Soren's statement came hours after JMM legislator and former chief minister Champai Soren reached Delhi. Addressing a government function in Jharkhand's Godda district, Hemant Soren alleged that the BJP brought people from Gujarat, Assam and Maharashtra to "spread poison among the tribals, Dalits, backward classes and minorities and make them fight with each other".



"Forget about society, these people work to break families and parties. They poach MLAs. Money is such a thing that it doesn't take long for politicians to move here and there," he said. Notably, Champai Soren left for Delhi on Sunday, amid speculations that he is likely to join the BJP, sources said. A close associate of Champai Soren claimed that the former chief minister left for the national capital from Kolkata. Soon after landing in Delhi, the JMM leader told reporters that he hadn't met any BJP leader and was in the national

capital on a "personal" visit. Hemant Soren also said that the assembly elections in Jharkhand are due this year but the poll schedule would be "decided by the opposition party in the state, not by the Election Commission".

'Experienced bitter humiliation'

PNS ■ RANCHI

Jharkhand Mukti Morcha (JMM) leader Champai Soren on Sunday said he experienced "bitter humiliation" as chief minister. His statement came hours after he reached Delhi amid speculations about him joining the BJP. He claimed all his government programmes were cancelled on July 3 by the party leadership without

his knowledge. "When I asked about the reasons for cancellation, I was told that there is a meeting of party legislators on July 3 and I cannot attend any government programmes till then," he posted on social media. "Can there be anything more humiliating in a democracy than a chief minister's programme being cancelled by another person?" he said.

CM invites 'Rajus'..

Continued from page 1

Bose Raju worked hard during the Karnataka Assembly elections although he didn't get a ticket. However, Rahul Gandhi recognized Bose Raju's hard work and made him a minister, the CM said. Bose Raju and Srinivasa Raju are the best examples of the fact that one can get recognition if one works with commitment. Both leaders must encourage Kshatriyas interested in joining politics and give opportunities to them. Retired IAS officer Srinivasa Raju is from the Kshatriya community and is working as an advisor to the Telangana government. The Congress government appointed Srinu Raju as Young India Skill University co-chairman, the CM said. "I have thought of taking

Kshatriyas into Legislative Houses. We will give a chance to them first in the party... I am giving my word that we will give an opportunity to become an MLA later. We have already appointed retired IAS officer Srinivasa Raju as a government advisor. You can meet me through him. We formed a government taking the fighting spirit of Alluri Sitarama Raju and Kumaram Bheem. Invest in the Future City. The Telangana government will extend cooperation to build the Kshatriya Bhavan. We will meet again in Kshatriya Bhavan," the CM said. Earlier, Karnataka Minister Bose Raju, Union Minister Srinivasa Varma and other Kshatriya leaders felicitated the CM. The CM paid floral tributes to Alluri Sitaramaraju's portrait.

Americans give Harris..

Continued from page 1

they're compared to each other. And Democrats continue to be much happier about her candidacy than they were about Biden's. Trump has spent the campaign championing himself as a strong leader who is capable of handling tough crises facing the country and suggesting that foreign leaders wouldn't respect Harris in the White House. But he doesn't have an

advantage with Americans on that characteristic, according to the survey. Four in 10 U.S. adults see Trump as a strong leader, and roughly the same share say that about Harris. About 4 in 10 say Trump is capable of handling a crisis, and a similar share say Harris is better positioned to do so. Americans are about evenly divided between who they think is more capable of winning in November — Trump or Harris. In July, before Biden

dropped out of the race, only about 2 in 10 Americans thought he was more capable of winning, while about twice as many thought that about Trump. "Trump had a better chance when Joe Biden was running," said Lisa Miller, a 42-year-old student in Elko, Nevada, and a Republican. "I think a lot of people who were insecure about Joe Biden are more secure with Kamala Harris' age and cognitive abilities."

Will raise division issues..

Continued from page 1

Deputy Chief Minister Bhatti Vikramarka and Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy one after the other. The Congress candidate for Telangana Rajya Sabha by-poll, Abhishek Manu Singhvi, said at the CLP meeting that it is a great honour to represent Telangana in the Rajya Sabha.

Telangana has a rich cultural heritage and it stood against the bourgeois system. It also has empowered its women. The politics of vengeance is increasing in the country and it exists in many states along with Telangana. The Congress needs to work actively considering this, he said. He said that he was a member of the Rajya Sabha twice in the past.

'Enhance security..

Continued from page 1

The other requests include developing a mobile app for working women which should have the facility to alert police and other officials when women are faced with any danger, she said. Alleging that the special protection force (SPF) set up by the state government in 2019 has remained mostly on paper, she said the force should be deployed effectively with more security personnel being drafted into it. "Upon a call from Telangana State Commission for Women, the female junior doctors met the Chairperson, Smt Nerella Sharadagaru. We wholeheartedly thank her for listening to our grievances," the Telangana Junior Doctors Association (JUDA) said on X. The junior doctors in Telangana have been holding protests since the last several days in protest against the woman doctor's alleged rape and murder in Kolkata and also seeking enhanced security measures in hospitals.

SC takes cognisance..

Continued from page 1

The body of the postgraduate trainee with severe injury marks was found inside the seminar hall of the hospital's chest department on August 9. A civic volunteer was arrested by the Kolkata Police in connection with the case the next day. The Calcutta High Court on August 13 ordered the transfer of the probe into the case from the Kolkata Police to the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) which started its investigation on August 14. The high court had ordered transfer of the probe to the CBI while hearing petitions,

including the one moved by the victim's parents praying for a court-monitored probe. Observing that the mob violence in RG Kar Medical College and Hospital was an absolute failure of state machinery, the high court had on August 16 directed the police and the hospital authorities to file affidavits on the situation there. The high court had said it was hard to believe that the police intelligence did not have information about the gathering of 7,000 people, when the state's lawyer told the court that a mob of such a number had assembled at the hospital in the early hours of Thursday.

Privatisation of IAS is 'Modi's..

Continued from page 1

through lateral entry on important posts in various ministries of the central government," Gandhi said in a post in Hindi on X. "I have always said that the underprivileged are not represented in all the country's top posts, including the top bureaucracy. Instead of improving it, they are being

pushed further away from the top posts through lateral entry," he said. "This is a robbery of the rights of talented youth preparing for UPSC and an attack on the concept of social justice including reservation for the underprivileged," he alleged. The SEBI is a vivid example of what representatives of a few corporates will do by sitting on decisive government

posts, where for the first time a person from the private sector was made the chairperson, Gandhi said in an apparent reference to the conflicts of interest allegations against SEBI chairperson Madhabi Buch. The INDIA bloc will strongly oppose this "anti-national step" that hurts both the administrative structure and social justice, Gandhi said. "Privatisation of the IAS is Modi's guarantee for ending reservation," he said.

effigies of the Congress. He said the 'merger' is a drama enacted by the Congress and the BRS and that the Congress failed to stick to its word in implementing the farm loan waiver scheme. "Around 64 lakh farmers took loans, but the government waived the loans of only 22 lakh farmers. The government announced that it will waive farm loans amounting to Rs 40,000 crore, however, it allocated only Rs 26,000 crore in the budget and waived only Rs 17,000 crore."

Indiramma..

Continued from page 1

Bhatti said the Congress government sanctioned Rs 4.7 crore to develop Papanna's native place into a tourist spot. A booklet brought out on Papanna's life should be distributed in all villages and copies should be given to the people. The government will sanction funds for this, he said. Recounting the heroic struggle of Papanna, Bhatti said that Papanna joined as a labourer in a Zamindar's farm and mobilised colleagues for a revolt. When information about this leaked out the feudal lord imprisoned all workers. Papanna fought against all odds and trained his friends to become soldiers and with their support took over the forts of the Zamindar. He not only took over the Warangal Fort but also the Golconda Fort, Bhatti said.

TG lands..

Continued from page 1

revenue courts, RDO, MRO, Special Deputy Collector, Collector and the CCLA court to get their problems solved. However, the Revenue Act-2020 ended all this, he added. There are lakhs of complaints pending and the Congress government is addressing them, he said. He said the Congress admin is sincere in solving Dharani problems and that the government is running a pilot project in two mandals to test the new ROR Act. The Revenue Minister said that he will not tolerate corruption in the Stamps, Registration and Revenue departments and that he will not tolerate corrupt officials under any circumstance. The government has given full operational freedom to the ACB, he said and added that the government will solve LRS applications.

Congress...

Continued from page 1

However, the reality on the ground tells a different story," KTR said. He said while the Congress government initiated the loan waiver process it has fallen short of commitments. A significant number of farmers across Telangana have been excluded from the scheme despite meeting all eligibility criteria.

'Plan ready..

Continued from page 1

He said the BJP has no 'karma' to enter into an alliance or merge the BRS with itself as the BRS is a corrupt party. Sanjay pointed out that the public has no connection with the 'alliance' and 'merger' business and that the Chief Minister raised the 'merger' issue only to divert public attention from farmers who were burning the





www.dailypioneer.com

facebook.com/dailypioneer | @TheDailyPioneer | instagram.com/dailypioneer/

PAPER WITH PASSION

## Moment of truth

### Elections to take place in Jammu and Kashmir after 10 years; first time after abrogation of Article 370

For the first time in a decade, elections are set to be held in the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir. After a long wait the elections have been announced for Jammu and Kashmir; the first since 2014, will take place in three phases on September 18, September 25, and October 1, with the results set to be declared on October 4. The region has been under President's Rule since 2018. This election marks significant progress in meeting the Supreme Court's directive that democracy be reinstated in Jammu and the Kashmir Valley by September 30. Last month in Srinagar, Prime Minister Narendra Modi had confirmed the upcoming election. This is particularly significant as it follows the bifurcation of the erstwhile state into two separate union territories — Jammu and Kashmir, and Ladakh — in August 2019, when Article 370 of the Indian Constitution, which provided special status to the region, was abrogated by the Indian Government. The last elections in Jammu and Kashmir were held in 2014, before the abrogation of



Article 370 and the dissolution of the state's legislative assembly in 2018. Since the 2019 political reorganization, Jammu and Kashmir has been under central administration. The impending elections will not only address the demand for local governance but will also test the popularity of the government's policies and decision in the region.

With new electoral boundaries drawn post-delimitation, the political map of Jammu and Kashmir has changed. This could impact electoral outcomes, shifting the balance of power between regional parties like the National Conference (NC) and the People's Democratic Party (PDP), and national parties like the

Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP). These elections could set the stage for fresh political alliances and realignments, potentially altering the political dynamics between the Kashmir and Jammu regions. The region's security situation will play a major role in the lead-up to and during the elections. The success of the elections will depend on maintaining peace and ensuring free and fair polling. Indeed, it would be quite a challenge to have peaceful elections, given the recent terrorist attacks in Jammu. Both domestic and international observers will be watching closely to assess the level of participation, especially in the Kashmir Valley. A high voter turnout could bolster the Indian government's stance that Jammu and Kashmir is an integral part of India and that democratic processes are functioning. On the other hand, a low turnout, especially in the valley, could suggest a disconnect between the people and the political establishment, complicating efforts to resolve tensions in the region. Elections are likely to impact the region's economy in a positive way. The new government will need to address unemployment, revive the tourism sector, and bring much-needed investments. A successful election could restore a sense of democratic normalcy but the task is daunting. A successful election, no matter who wins, will surely align J&K with the country's mainstream political landscape.

## PICTALK



Women devotees carry holy water in the 'Kalash Yatra' in Jaipur

# Lessons from the Wayanad tragedy



ATUL SEHGAL

### To prevent future catastrophes, we must reassess our approach to urban planning and disaster management, ensuring that development is aligned with sustainable practices

The Wayanad tragedy—serious lessons for the future. The incident and news of the very recent Wayanad landslide tragedy seems to be passé. No one is talking about it now when the media headlines are being hogged by the fresh and more serious episode—of rape, mob violence and anarchy in Kolkata, WB. This does not suggest that we begin taking a lighter look at the long-term serious administrative steps required to forestall incidents of landslides occurring more due to misgovernance than climate change. More of such incidents are waiting to happen if we do not take urgent, timely steps. It is with great shock that we heard the tragic death of more than 400 persons in the landslides in Wayanad, Kerala and of another 250-plus persons who were reportedly injured or missing. The two large landslides that hit Mundakkai and Chooralmala in Wayanad in the early hours of July 30, resulted in wide destruction, several fatalities, and serious injuries to hundreds. While incidents of natural disasters are episodes apparently beyond the control of humans, there is much humans can do to prevent them and minimize the damage wrought by them after they occur. It is remarkable that just about a week before this tragedy the state government in Kerala was warned by the Union Home Ministry about the possibility of a catastrophe based on the feedback provided by an NDRF team deputed to assess the susceptible site. This is a sad and sobering reflection on the ham-fisted administrative machinery of the state government in India. The frequent incidents of collapse of buildings and bridges in our country have a direct and crying connection with unauthorised, faulty building construction in violation of prescribed safety norms of the government. This illegal construction takes place right under the nose of regulatory agencies of the government. Corrupt government officials allow unauthorised construction and things appear normal till some major mishap occurs, capturing news head-



lines all over. The sadder part of the story is that state governments are inadequately equipped for disaster management. Invariably, central assistance is sought and the army has to come to the rescue of the hapless, distressed citizens. The case of landslides and the damage caused by them is not much different from that of buildings and bridges collapsing elsewhere. It would be in the fitness of things to systematically list out the reasons and preventive remedies for such catastrophic landslide events in our country.

**Heavy torrential rains:** Heavy torrential rains are not the core causal factors. They are only the triggering factors behind such landslides. Further, to say that the intensity and frequency of rainfall in any region or area is purely subject to uncertainties of nature is not quite correct. Our living paradigms do influence rainfall patterns in various geographical areas. Climate change is the result of faulty living paradigms. There are things we can do to prevent interruption of normal rainfall patterns. Ancient scientific literature of India can provide useful guidance in this regard. **Wrong building construction practices:** Our building construction and water management practices are not perfect. Our deficient under-



HEAVY TORRENTIAL RAINS ARE NOT THE CORE CAUSAL FACTORS. THEY ARE ONLY THE TRIGGERING FACTORS BEHIND SUCH LANDSLIDES

standing and practices based thereon regarding the earth's geographical interiors puts us in a vulnerable position. Cracking and crumbling mountains are a direct outcome of these practices. In this regard, one has to merely cast a look at medieval time buildings that stand intact after hundreds of years while also maintaining the integrity of their surrounding hilly sites. Ancient and medieval buildings were built with stones. Modern buildings use RCC with heavy foundations that damage the host sites. We need to learn and adopt some of our ancient building techniques which gave stronger, environment friendly and more durable structures. **Unauthorised mining:** Unauthorised mining activities in contravention of set safety regulations cause tremendous harm to the terrains, making them vulnerable to landslides. Strong deterrent and punitive legal measures are the need of the hour. **Local violation of established building safety norms:** As stated above, corruption in municipalities and local government bodies accounts for many cases of unauthorised building construction in flagrant violation of safety norms. Violation of safety norms should be strictly penalised. **Deforestation:** Deforestation

in hilly areas for indiscriminate construction—either of residential buildings or commercial buildings bridges highways or flyovers is a big factor in the wearing of underground natural plates that support hills and mountains. The adverse effects of deforestation may not be evident immediately. But long term, they show themselves in the form of natural disturbances leading to earthquakes and climate change. This phenomenon needs to be studied at the institutional level, and supported by the government. We should not always depend on foreign agency research results. We have the capability and wherewithal to carry out research and devise remedial measures in the form of specific afforestation measures in identified regions. **Inept state government machinery:** As indicated above, our state government agencies are neglectful, inefficient, callous and corrupt. What is the reason? Proper systems do not exist that will ensure the identification and penalization of the guilty in such matters. Slow and tardy judicial proceedings in an unsound judicial system only serve to encourage the inefficient and the corrupt. (The author is a management consultant based in New Delhi; views are personal)

## Tackling the water management crisis amidst rapid development

### India needs to build a resilient water ecosystem that supports our growing urban needs and contributes towards the holistic vision of Viksit Bharat



RASMI RANJAN RAY

India's urban landscape has undergone a tremendous transformation since independence, evolving from traditional townships into thriving metropolises that drive the nation's economic and cultural growth. The Government of India's ambition for a Viksit Bharat by 2047 and their efforts have provided the necessary impetus for this sector. The Union Budget 2024-25 reflects this commitment with an allocation of Rs 11.11 lakh crore in capital expenditure and an emphasis on water supply, sewage treatment, and solid waste management projects in collaboration with state governments, multilateral development banks, and research institutions. Our cities, bustling with life and opportunities, stand as testaments to our collective aspirations and endeavours. Yet, beneath this vibrant facade lies a critical challenge that demands urgent attention and innovative solutions: water and wastewater management. **The Past & the Present Status of Wastewater Management in India:** India's rapid urbanisation has



brought with it significant challenges in managing water resources. According to the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) (data for 2020-21), India's urban centres generate around 72,368 million litres of sewage per day, but the treatment capacity is only 31,841 million litres per day. This gap leads to untreated wastewater being discharged into our rivers and lakes, contributing to pollution and posing severe health risks. The Government has initiated several programs like the Namami Gange Programme, Atal Mission for Rejuvenation and Urban Transformation (AMRUT), and the Smart Cities Mission to address these issues. These initiatives aim to enhance the sewage treatment infrastructure, promote sustainable urban development, and ensure clean

water availability. However, over the years, the path to achieving these goals has encountered numerous challenges, from inadequate infrastructure to the absence of innovation, funding constraints and lack of relevant stakeholder partnership. The gloom has taken a shift in the recent past with relevant stakeholders like youth from the communities, government, and private players all stepping up, discussing viable solutions, promoting innovation and emphasising the need to present sustainable solutions against water & wastewater challenges. **Sustainable Management of Water in India:** In India, the future of water hinges on our ability to adopt the circular model, offering a holistic and integrated approach towards water management. Unlike the traditional linear approach, a circular economy emphasises reducing waste, reusing resources, and recycling materials to create a closed-loop system. In the context of water management, this means treating wastewater to high standards and reusing it for various purposes, such as industrial

processes, agricultural irrigation, and landscape maintenance. Thus, significantly reducing the demand for freshwater resources and ensuring treated water gets reintegrated into the supply cycle. **A Blend of Factors to Achieve Water Management** The nation's urban development cannot be chalked down and implemented by a single entity especially for a country like ours with a huge geographic scale. **Learnings and the Road Ahead:** Despite the global threat that water presents, every nation adapts to an approach more suited to its people and developmental needs. The urban development has picked up momentum in recent decades. We need to balance development ambitions and ensure the essentials. A practical way to fix that is by building a resilient water ecosystem that supports our growing urban needs and contributes towards the holistic vision of Viksit Bharat by 2047. (The writer is the CEO of Suez India; views are personal)

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### MAMATA SHOULD STEP DOWN

Madam — Barring the emergency cases, number of State hospitals including private institutions have boycotted their OP (Out Patient) services to show their solidarity for the victim on the brutal rape and murder at RG Kar hospital Calcutta. The CM of West Bengal Mamata Banerjee must be crest fallen and should have taken up the moral responsibility and have resigned by now for this gruesome murder and rape of the intern doctor at RG Kar hospital. Who can understand better the pains of a woman other than a woman who's heading the State? Her party in power by taking out a rally when she herself is the Chief Minister, Home Minister and Health Minister is the height of a mockery when she failed in all the three counts even in maintaining the basic law and order in the state. The Calcutta High Court has lost its faith in the West Bengal government while shocked to observe the vandalism played upon post the incident at the hospital premises. Mamata can't have any defence and the enquiry by CBI is not the end of the case to bring real culprits to books. WB needs a disinfectant to clean the hospital as well as the minds of the team Mamata on the whole to ensure safety of the people is causing a greater concern.

A P Thiruvadi | Chennai

### CM SIDDARAMAIAH IN TROUBLE

Madam— The Karnataka Chief Minister Siddaramaiah is poised to face prosecution in connection with the MUDA land scam case. The approval for legal action has been granted by Governor Thawar Chand Gehlot, following a private complaint. The allegations centre around the Mysore Urban Development Authority (MUDA) and claims of malpractices surrounding land allotments. It is alleged that Parvathi Siddaramaiah, the wife of CM benefited from irregularities when MUDA acquired her 3-

## Elections in J&K after 10 years



The Supreme Court's order had been implemented meticulously by the election commission and election had been declared and have been welcomed by all including the radicals which is a momentous moment for citizens of the state and it will pave the way for the return of democracy to the Valley however complex a process it might prove to be.

Due to the elections in the state people will get the chance to elect the popular government in the state and people will have direct say in the government which is the representative way and the Indian way of upholding democratic values. It is the right step forward irrespective of what the changed status has meant in the last five years after

The arguments can be endless over the propriety of going back on a historical commitment, but there is no denying that democracy is now slated to return to a more egalitarian region, even if it has been divided into two UTs of J&K and Ladakh. Long-term stability and prosperity of the region can be assured if a popular government is in charge and works for the development of the people.

Yash Pal Ralhan | Jalandhar

### PARIS PARALYMPICS

Madam — In a warm send off ceremony of the athletes for Paris Paralympics 2024. India is sending its largest-ever contingent for the Paris Paralympic Games as 84 athletes will look to leave no stone unturned in their quest for glory in the French capital. Those 84 athletes will be taking part in 12 sports archery, athletics, badminton, canoeing, cycling, blind judo and powerlifting among others. The para-athletes have a remarkable ability to overcome obstacles and turn challenges into opportunities. They have shown remarkable determination and perseverance in their preparation and hopes were made of getting the highest ever medal in the game. We wish them the very best and are sure they will inspire millions back home with their performances and medal tally. Hope this time, each and every athlete will perform well.

Dimple Wadhawan | Kanpur

Send your feedback to: letterstopioneer@gmail.com

N Sadhasiva | Bengaluru





## FIRST COLUMN

### THE ART OF OFFICE FRIENDSHIP

Be clear about where to draw the line, respect others' time, workload and personal space



RACHNA LAKHPATRI

In today's fast-paced corporate climate, the line that traditionally defines coworker and friend is becoming increasingly blurred. With the amount of time spent at work nowadays, professional connections are no longer optional, but rather required. At the same time, these interactions necessitate skill, awareness, and a healthy dosage of emotional intelligence. Imagine this: You're out for coffee with your work BFF, laughing about last night's reality TV drama, when your boss walks in. Do you switch to shop chat or keep the banter going? It's a circumstance that demonstrates the narrow line that must be walked in business friendships. What's the key? Mastering the art of context change.

Professionalism does not need you to transform into a robot from 9 to 5. It's knowing when and how to crack a joke, as well as when to go serious. For lunch breaks, a friendship's dimmer switch is extremely bright and vivid, slightly dim for group projects, and extremely professional during business meetings. Remember the phrase "What happens in Vegas, stays in Vegas"? Consider that in your workplace friendships. All those meaningful chats over after-work drinks? Not a water cooler material. Closed-door conversations and revelations made outside of the office should be treated as classified material. That's because your ability to maintain secrets may make or destroy your working relationships, and even your career.

Effective communication is crucial in all relationships, but business connections have a unique twist. As much as you want to keep communication open, you must also respect privacy. It's a difficult balance of being



there for the work friend without intruding into areas they're not ready to discuss. The benefits of working friendships include the ability to accept and provide honest feedback. However, if constructive criticism is not handled correctly, it may quickly turn into a friendship minefield. Wrap that severe love with genuine support. Remember that your goal is for both of you to succeed, not to win a point-scoring contest. Arguments will inevitably occur, even among the best of colleagues. Your adept handling of these hiccups in the path is an undeniable sign of friendship. Address disagreements directly on, but with sensitivity and professionalism; see it as a means to strengthen your partnership, not a friendship-ending disaster.

It's acceptable to get along better with some people than others, but try to avoid forming restricted groups. Instead, be the friend who draws everyone together. Organise inclusive team activities to help break down departmental barriers. Who knows, you might meet your next work bestie in accounting! We all have terrible days, but repeatedly unloading personal problems to your coworkers will put even the strongest relationships under strain. Consider the emotional strain you're putting on others. Sometimes a simple "I'm having a rough day" may suffice—save the deep dives for proper times and locations. The key to a working friendship is setting clear boundaries. Some suggestions include being clear about where to draw the line regarding each other's time, workload, space, or personal difficulties. Consider setting boundaries to be like a guardrail, keeping your friendship on track but not a wall. Finally, be sure to appreciate your victories, big and small. That fast high-five you received for acing that presentation, or the team lunch for sealing a major deal? Those boost office morale. These moments of shared joy are the glue that holds workplace friendships together. Lastly, success in business friendships requires establishing a balance between professionalism and personal connection. Hit the sweet spot, and you may find enthusiasm in your professional life while also developing potential lasting relationships outside of the confines of your current position. Go ahead, take the first step towards making your cubicle neighbour a true friend!

(The author is a freelance writer; views are personal)

## Responsible tourism: Our promise to future generations



DIVYA BHATIA

The future of tourism hinges on responsible travel, where both travelers and industry stakeholders play a crucial role in preserving our heritage for future generations

Visit Agra, and you'll witness a heart-wrenching sight: graffiti marring the walls of its iconic monuments. Lovers etching their names into the Taj Mahal—a monument of love—are tarnishing the legacy of love with their reckless behavior. This is just one example of irresponsible tourism. From defacing historic sites to littering, damaging environments, and polluting water bodies, such behavior is widespread.

To counteract these issues, embracing responsible tourism is now essential. The tourism industry, one of the largest and fastest-growing sectors globally, holds vast potential for economic growth. Yet, this rapid expansion often brings environmental and social challenges. Over-tourism can damage natural habitats, exhaust local resources, and erode cultural traditions. Sustainable tourism aims to address these challenges by promoting responsible travel that supports local communities and preserves the environment.

Tourism's environmental footprint is broad, affecting ecosystems, biodiversity, pollution, and resource use. Popular destinations often see spikes in waste, water shortages, and habitat destruction due to tourist influxes. The Great Barrier Reef in Australia, for instance, is under threat from both climate change and tourism, highlighting the need for immediate conservation efforts. This underscores the significance of sustainable tourism practices that emphasise environmental care.

Governments are key players in driving sustainable tourism, establishing policies and frameworks that encourage eco-friendly practices. Australia, known for its diverse landscapes and rich biodiversity, has long understood this necessity. Nishant Kashikar, Country Manager for India & Gulf at Tourism Australia, explains the country's dedication to sustainable tourism: "Australia's culture, landscape, and wildlife form the heart of our tourism industry. We have a duty to manage them wisely." Through collaborations with tourism operators, Australia focuses on restorative and regenerative travel, especially at renowned sites like the Great Barrier Reef. Despite progress, challenges persist in conveying the importance of sustainable travel to markets prioritizing value and experience.

Kashikar further states the steps taken to protect natural treasures: "Our operators provide eco-friendly accommodations and low-impact activities that complement conservation efforts at the reef. Initiatives such as carbon-neutral menus and zero-waste hotels are raising the bar in hospitality." He acknowledges ongoing challenges, stating, "Effectively communicating the value of sustainable tourism to markets like India, which are driven by value and experience, requires a tailored approach."

Moscow, a city famous for its historical and cultural richness, is also leading the way in sustainable tourism efforts. Evgeny Kozlov, Chairman of the Moscow City Tourism Committee, highlights the city's environmental transformation: "Around 50% of Moscow is made up of green zones. Over the past decade, we have rejuvenated 900 parks and green spaces, as well as revitalized 40 embankments. This transformation not only beautifies the city but also offers unique opportunities for eco-friendly tourism."

Kozlov stresses the importance of building an urban ecosystem accessible to everyone, with incentives for investors in sustainable tourism infrastructure.



THE ECO-FRIENDLY TOURISM IS NOT JUST A TREND BUT A NECESSITY. THEIR INITIATIVES ARE PAVING THE WAY FOR A FUTURE WHERE RESPONSIBLE TRAVEL IS THE NORM, AND TRAVELERS PLAY AN ACTIVE ROLE IN PRESERVING THE PLANET

Madhya Pradesh is becoming a leader in responsible tourism by blending community development with environmental preservation. Sheo Shekhar Shukla, Principal Secretary of Tourism and Culture, outlines the state's dual focus: "Madhya Pradesh is dedicated to both its people and its landscapes. Our Responsible Tourism initiative seeks to uplift local communities while preserving the state's natural beauty and cultural history." The promotion of rural homestays and support for local artisans drive economic development with minimal environmental impact.

He adds, "By promoting local craftsmanship and sustainable building practices, we ensure tourism development benefits both communities and the environment. Programs like Safe Tourism Destinations for Women and Responsible Souvenirs further strengthen this mission." Airlines and hotels are at the forefront of sustainable tourism efforts, addressing their significant environmental impact. As air travel continues to grow, the aviation sector's role in global greenhouse gas emissions has come under scrutiny. The hospitality industry is also increasingly adopting eco-friendly practices that aim to balance guest experiences with environmental responsibility.

Akash Garg, CMD of Moksha Himalaya Spa Resort, acknowledges that transitioning to sustainable practices requires an upfront investment. However, he emphasizes that these costs are outweighed by long-term savings. "Initially, there are costs that a property has to bear when implementing sustainable practices. However, these investments often lead to long-term benefits and savings," says Garg. The resort's efforts include reducing single-use plastics and creating an onsite bottling plant, reinforcing its commitment to sustainability.

Moreover, the resort engages with the local community, with 80% of its workforce from Himachal Pradesh, and promotes regional cultural experiences for guests. At the Sheraton Kosgoda Turtle Beach Resort, Mano Gunasekera,

General Manager, speaks about the broader impact of sustainability within Marriott International. The company is deeply committed to global best practices. "Marriott International, is focused strongly on best sustainability practices. At times such initiatives come with a cost, however with the proposition of there being a greater impact on the environment," says Gunasekera. The resort supports responsible tourism through projects like turtle conservation and encouraging guests to adopt eco-friendly habits, such as reusing linens and reducing water consumption. These initiatives align with Marriott's Serve360 program, which aims to lower energy usage and promote environmentally conscious products.

Anirban Sarkar, General Manager of Radisson Blu Greater Noida, underscores the importance of sustainability in shaping the hotel's long-term vision. Radisson Blu has set an ambitious target to achieve net-zero emissions by 2050, far ahead of many global initiatives. Sarkar believes that promoting sustainability and responsible business practices strengthens the brand's reputation and builds local support. "Focus towards Sustainability and Responsible Business practices actually strengthens the brand and shows the brand in a positive light," he explains. Vietnam's leading carrier Vietjet is also making strides toward sustainability. The airline's efforts have earned it recognition in categories like "Outstanding Sustainable Transport." By investing in a modern fleet that reduces fuel consumption by up to 20%, Vietjet is helping lower emissions. Additionally, the airline has transitioned to using eco-friendly materials, such as recyclable packaging, and is researching sustainable aviation fuel with a goal of achieving net-zero emissions by 2050.

Sri Lankan Airlines is also taking a more gradual approach, integrating sustainability into its services through eco-friendly amenities in Business Class. The airline has introduced pillow and headrest covers made from recycled PET plastic, reducing its plastic footprint.

These efforts are part of broader initiatives, including the use of sustainable carpets onboard. In the online travel space, Rikant Pittie, Co-Founder of Ease My Trip, highlights the company's role in promoting sustainability by working with local authorities to improve eco-friendly facilities. Ease My Trip has also launched educational campaigns to encourage travelers to choose green accommodations and reduce waste. "We tackle the lack of sufficient infrastructure by collaborating with local authorities to enhance eco-friendly facilities," says Pittie. For Manoj Kumar Tiwari, General Manager of Regency Holidays, promoting sustainable tourism is less of a challenge and more of an opportunity to educate guests. "Educating the guests to align them with our brand ethos to promote luxury sustainably is the key," Tiwari explains.

Daniel D'Souza, President and Country Head of Holidays at SOTC Travel, notes the increasing demand for sustainable travel, particularly after the pandemic. He observes a shift in travelers' preferences toward authentic, eco-friendly experiences. "Sustainable travel has gained momentum, with MICE groups increasingly emphasizing sustainable practices and unconventional accommodations," he says. Trishal Rao, Chief Sales Officer at SKIL Travel, sees the challenges of promoting sustainable tourism as opportunities for innovation. SKIL Travel has incorporated electric vehicles into its fleet and is implementing eco-friendly technologies throughout its services. The eco-friendly tourism is not just a trend but a necessity. Their initiatives are paving the way for a future where responsible travel is the norm, and travelers play an active role in preserving the planet. As Evgeny Kozlov succinctly states, "We must build a tourism industry based on sustainable development principles to ensure that future generations can enjoy our world responsibly."

(The author is a travel writer and influences, she works with travel industry as a mentor; views are personal)

## Protecting our healers: Urgent action needed to end violence against healthcare providers

The recent assault on medics underscores the urgent need for legal protections and enhanced security measures to ensure their safety

The recent barbaric act of violence, rape, and murder against a resident lady doctor in Kolkata has sent shockwaves across the nation. This incident, coupled with the growing number of attacks on medical professionals, calls for an urgent need for a safe operating environment for those who dedicate their lives to saving others.



B K JHA

The entire country is deeply saddened by these events, and there is a collective call for the government and law enforcement agencies to ensure the safety and security of healthcare workers. This is not just about protecting individuals; it is about safeguarding the sanctity of a profession that stands at the forefront of human survival. Healthcare professionals work tirelessly, often under immense pressure, to deliver care and save lives. Yet, reports of doctors being manhandled, threatened, and even killed are, unfortunately, not uncommon. Doctors are taught to prioritize the ABCs—Airway, Breathing, and Circulation—when a patient is in their care. Their primary focus is always on saving lives, regardless of

the circumstances. However, when medical professionals are themselves under threat, their ability to perform these critical tasks is compromised. The environment in which they operate must be one of safety and respect, allowing them to carry out their duties without fear of violence. The issue of violence against healthcare workers is not unique to India; it is a global problem. However, many countries have implemented robust measures to protect their medical professionals, setting examples that India could follow. For instance, in the United Kingdom, the National Health Service (NHS) has a zero-tolerance policy towards violence against its staff. This policy is supported by a dedicated

security team that works closely with law enforcement to ensure that any incidents are dealt with swiftly and effectively. Additionally, the NHS has implemented a comprehensive reporting system that allows healthcare workers to report any form of abuse or violence, ensuring that these incidents are documented and addressed. In the United States, several states have enacted laws that classify assaults on healthcare workers as felonies, carrying heavier penalties than those for assaults on other individuals. This legal framework acts as a strong deterrent against violence, sending a clear message that attacks on medical professionals will not be tolerated. In Australia, hospitals

have introduced a range of safety measures, including the use of security personnel, panic buttons in consultation rooms, and mandatory training for staff on how to de-escalate potentially violent situations. India must urgently adopt similar measures to protect its healthcare workers. The government and relevant



authorities need to implement stringent actions that will create a safer environment for doctors and other medical professionals. First and foremost, the government should enact laws that classify any form of violence against healthcare professionals as a serious criminal offence, with severe

penalties for those found guilty. This legal framework should be supported by swift and decisive action from law enforcement agencies to ensure that justice is served promptly. In addition to legal protections, hospitals, especially those in high-risk areas, should be equipped with comprehensive security measures. These could include the deployment of trained security personnel, the installation of panic buttons, surveillance cameras, and secure entry points to prevent unauthorized access. Such measures would go a long way in deterring potential threats and ensuring that medical professionals can work without fear. Moreover, healthcare workers should receive mandatory training on how

to handle violent situations. This training should cover de-escalation techniques, self-defence, and the proper use of security measures available to them. The safety and security of healthcare professionals are non-negotiable. Those who dedicate their lives to saving others deserve to work in an environment free from fear and violence. The government, law enforcement agencies, and society at large must come together to ensure that the medical fraternity is protected and respected. It is time to take decisive action to safeguard those who save lives, ensuring that healthcare professionals can continue their noble work without fear. (The author is a senior journalist. Views expressed are personal)



IN BRIEF



**'Improving low-cost deposit focus area for bank'**

Improving CASA or low-cost deposit mobilisation is the focus area for the Canara Bank, and efforts taken in the direction are yielding results, its Managing Director K Satyanarayana Raju has said. Current Account Savings Account (CASA) stood at 31 per cent of the total deposits, and the aim is to increase to 33 per cent by the end of the current fiscal, he said. Rapid growth cannot be expected on the current account side, and it is another challenge to keep them for the long term as businesses tend to move them to term deposits quickly, he said. On the savings side, he said, "Our initiatives have started giving the results. You can see the accumulation and creation of the deposits. From year-on-year basis, June to June, if you see, there is an improvement of Rs 12,000 crore. The focus of the bank will continue on savings bank individual deposits by introducing unique and innovative products, he added.

**Substantial progress likely in India-Aus FTA talks**

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Chief negotiators of India and Australia will begin the next round of talks for the comprehensive free trade agreement from tomorrow in Sydney, where both sides are likely to close negotiations on several chapters of the pact, an official said.

Both countries have already implemented an interim pact and are in discussions to expand its scope under the CECA (Comprehensive Economic Cooperation Agreement).

The interim pact - Economic Cooperation and Trade Agreement (ECTA) - came into force in December 2022.

The tenth round of negotiations is scheduled from August 19-22 in Sydney.

"Out of the total 19 areas of the agreement, we have completed our discussions on four chapters, and we are in very



advanced stages in a few others. We hope that in this round, we should be able to close altogether, maybe more than 10 chapters," the commerce ministry official said.

In this round, the official said that both countries are likely to get into market access discussions in goods and services.

The ECTA provides duty-free access to Indian exporters of over 6,000 broad sectors, including textiles, leather, furniture, jewellery and machinery in the Australian market. Under the pact, Australia has offered zero-duty access to India for about 96.4 per cent of exports.

On the other hand, the

CECA envisages deeper and comprehensive engagement on the five issues - goods, services, digital trade, government procurement and rules of origin - that were agreed under ECTA.

Collaboration in space, mining and sports are among 15 new areas mutually identified by India and Australia for negotiations under the comprehensive free trade agreement. For the first time, these new segments would become part of a trade pact being negotiated by India.

Australia is an important trading partner of India in the Oceania region, with merchandise trade between India and Australia reaching around USD 24 billion in 2023-24.

India's exports to Australia last fiscal stood at USD 7.94 billion, while imports were USD 16.15 billion. The trade between the two countries has been hovering at around USD 25 billion mark since 2021-22.

**MICROPLASTIC CONTAMINATION IN FOOD PRODUCTS**

**FSSAI to develop methods for detection**

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Food regulator FSSAI has launched a project to assess microplastic contamination in food products and develop methods for its detection.

The Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) has launched an innovative project to tackle the growing concern of microplastic contamination in food, recognising microplastic pollution as an emerging threat that requires immediate attention.

According to an official statement, the project -- Micro-and Nano-Plastics as Emerging Food

Contaminants: Establishing Validated Methodologies and Understanding the Prevalence in Different Food Matrices -- was started in March this year.

The aim is to develop and validate analytical methods for detecting micro and nano-plastics in various food products, as well as assess their prevalence and exposure levels in India.

"The primary objectives of the project include developing standard protocols for micro/nano-plastic analysis, conducting intra- and inter-laboratory comparisons, and generating critical data on microplastic exposure levels among consumers," FSSAI said.



**RISING DEMAND IN RURAL MARKETS**

**FMCG players expect volume trends to sustain**

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG) companies expect to sustain volume growth in the coming quarters, buoyed by recovery of demand in rural markets and good monsoon, despite concerns over growing food inflation.

FMCG majors, including HUL, ITC, Dabur, Britannia, Nestle and Emami, in their June quarter earnings have reported 'green shoots' from the rural markets and strong growth from e-commerce channels, particularly from quick-commerce platforms.

The industry had around 6.6 per cent volume growth in the April-June period of this fiscal. However, companies are worried about elevated food inflation as coffee and cocoa prices have gone up unprecedentedly. Amid expectations of an increase in cereals and grains prices, some of the players have even indicated price hikes.

Dabur CEO Mohit Malhotra said, "Going forward, the volume will increase on the back of rural inching up for us. So I expect the subsequent quarters to be better than our

existing quarters, but definitely not worse."

He expressed optimism, saying that with a good monsoon, improving macroeconomic indicators and rural-centric govern-

ment spending, FMCG demand will see a gradual uptick.

Malhotra also mentioned inflation in food is very high today and "we might have to take some price increases in food, but it depends upon how the situation is."

Marico MD & CEO Saugata Gupta said the FMCG sector continued to witness gradual improvement in demand trends in the June quarter, with rural growth ahead of urban. "We expect vol-

ume trends to sustain the improving trajectory, aided by stable retail inflation, a healthily progressing monsoon season, and the government's budgetary allocation towards boosting the rural economy," he said.

However, Gupta also added, "elevated food inflation and spatial distribution of rainfall will be key factors to be monitored." Nestle, in its first quarter earnings statement, said: "Commodity prices are seeing unprecedented headwinds in coffee and cocoa with all-time high prices and an ongoing price rally."



**Air India cabin crew assaulted at London hotel**

A female cabin crew member of Air India was allegedly assaulted by an intruder at a London hotel earlier this week, with the airline saying it is pursuing the matter with the local police. Sources in the news said a homeless man barged into the room at the hotel where the female cabin crew was staying and assaulted her. As she shouted, others staying nearby came and rescued her and the person was caught, they added. One of the sources said the cabin crew was allegedly sexually assaulted at the hotel while two other sources claimed it was a physical assault. The incident happened at a star hotel near the London Heathrow airport. The cabin crew member has returned to India and is undergoing counselling, the sources added. In a statement, an Air India spokesperson said it was "deeply anguished by an unlawful incident of intrusion at a hotel, operated by a major international chain, that affected one of our crew members". The airline in the statement said it is providing all possible support to the colleague and their broader team, including professional counselling. "Air India is also working with the local police to pursue the matter to the fullest extent of the law, and with the hotel management to ensure such incidents are not repeated."



**India's holding of American securities reach US \$241.9 bn**

India's holding of US government securities touched a high of USD 241.9 billion in June as the country continued to increase its exposure for the third straight month. Japan was the top holder with securities worth over USD 1.11 trillion followed by China at the second spot with a holding valued at USD 780.2 billion in June, according to the latest data released by the US Treasury Department. At the third place was the United Kingdom with an exposure of USD 741.5 billion ahead of Luxembourg at the fourth position with a holding to the tune of USD 384.2 billion. Among the countries and jurisdictions, India was at the 12th place owning American government securities worth USD 241.9 billion in June, higher than USD 237.8 billion value recorded in May. As per the data, India's holding is the highest in the last one year and it was at USD 237.8 billion in May 2024. In April this year, it touched USD 233.5 billion declining from USD 240.6 billion in March. In June last year, the exposure was at USD 235.4 billion. Other countries' jurisdictions among the top 10 holders were Canada at the fifth spot with a holding of USD 374.8 billion, followed by Cayman Islands (USD 319.4 billion), Belgium (USD 318 billion), Ireland (USD 308 billion), France (USD 307.2 billion) and Switzerland (USD 287.1 billion).

**FPIs turn net sellers; pull out Rs 21,201 crore from equities in Aug so far**

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Foreign investors continued their relentless selling in the Indian equity markets in August, offloading shares worth Rs 21,201 crore due to the unwinding of the yen carry trade, recession fears in the US and ongoing geopolitical conflicts.

This came after an inflow of Rs 32,365 crore in July and Rs 26,565 crore in June, data with the depositories showed.

Foreign portfolio investors (FPIs) infused funds in these two months on the expectation of sustained economic growth, continued reform measures, better-than-expect-

ed earnings season and political stability.

Before that, FPIs withdrew Rs 25,586 crore in May on poll jitters and over Rs 8,700 crore in April on concerns over a tweak in India's tax treaty with Mauritius and a sustained rise in US bond yields.

According to the data, FPIs withdrew a net amount of Rs 21,201 crore in equities so far this month (August 1-17).

So far this year, FPIs invested Rs 14,364 crore in equities, data with the depositories showed.

FPI outflows witnessed in August were mainly driven by a combination of global and domestic factors.

**Stock markets to take cues from global trends, FII trading activity: Analysts**

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

With the earnings season drawing to a close, stock markets will take cues from global trends and foreign investors' trading activity this week, analysts said.

The US FOMC (Federal Open Market Committee) minutes will be the major highlight this week, experts said.

"This week, there are fewer cues on the macro and micro fronts, as the Q1 earnings season has concluded. However, important global economic data, such as Japan's inflation numbers and the minutes from the US FOMC meeting, will be closely watched. The

uncertain geopolitical situation remains the primary near-term risk for the market," said Santosh Meena, Head of Research, Swastika Investmart Ltd.

Traders will also closely monitor institutional flows and crude oil price movement, he added.

Easing fears of a recession in the US triggered a global market rally on Friday.

"Positive US economic data like cooling inflation and robust retail sales numbers shrugged off recession fears while talks of a rate cut by the US Fed as early as next month fuelled a mega rally across global equities, including India," Prashanth Tapse, Senior

VP (Research), Mehta Equities Ltd, said. The 30-share BSE benchmark jumped 1,330.96 points or 1.68 per cent to settle at 80,436.84 on Friday, marking its best single-day gain in more than two months. The NSE Nifty surged 397.40 points or 1.65 per cent to close at a two-week high of 24,541.15.

"The outlook for the market will be guided by the F O M C meeting minutes, US existing home sales and new home sales data,"

Palka Arora Chopra, Director, Master Capital Services Ltd, said. Last week, the BSE benchmark jumped 730.93 points or 0.91 per cent, the Nifty climbed 173.65 points or 0.71 per cent.



**Foxconn business in India crosses US \$10 billions**

PNS ■ SRIPERUMBUDUR

iPhone contract manufacturer Foxconn's business in India has grown to over USD 10 billion till 2024, its chairman Young Liu said here.

Foxconn has invested USD 1.4 billion in India till date, according to the company.

"So far, till last year, we have done more than USD 10 billion in business size. We will do much more in this coming year," Liu said.

He was speaking on the sidelines of the inauguration of the company's women-only

**Invests US \$1.4 billion till date**



residential complex near Foxconn's plant here on Saturday. Liu, a Padma

Bhushan awardee, said that during his current visit to the country he met chief ministers

of several states and feels that India is on the rise.

"After visiting so many states in India I felt that India is ascending. Foxconn wants to be a part of it. We will grow together with India's growth," Liu said.

This is Liu's first visit to India after he was conferred Padma Bhushan, the third-highest civilian award, on the eve of the 75th Republic Day this year. Liu started his about a week long visit to India with a meeting with Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Wednesday.

**SMALL SATELLITE BUSINESS**

**ISRO's SSLV, private players Skyroot, Agnikul eye share**

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

ISRO's latest satellite launch vehicle "SSLV" is the first rocket in its category to be ready for commercialisation with two others, 'Vikram' from Skyroot and 'Agnibaan' from Agnikul Cosmos, expected to vie for market share to place small satellites in orbit.

According to industry estimates, the satellite launch market in India is expected to grow from USD 720 million in 2022 to USD 3.5 billion by 2033 and small satellites are likely to be the most preferred modes for a number of applications ranging from providing internet connectivity to earth



observation.

Space start-ups such as Pixxel and Satsure have already announced plans

to have constellations of small satellites for the range of services they plan to offer and Indian launch vehicles will

vie to be the preferred rockets to place these satellites in orbit.

"Larger launch vehicles are there, but with a large number of satellites being launched, companies do not want to wait, they want to launch a satellite as soon as they can and small vehicles are tailor made for them," Lt Gen A K Bhatt (retd), Director General of Indian Space Association, told PTI. Pixxel is also considering using ISRO's launch vehicles to place its hyper-spectral satellites in orbit later this year.

"Right now, of the six satellites we are building, three of them will launch with SpaceX and three with ISRO,"

Pixxel CEO Awais Ahmed told PTI in July. Bhatt said the Indian National Space Promotion and Authorization Center (IN-SPACe) was also in discussion with various government ministries for having a constellation of small satellites to meet their requirements.

"These satellites will be built by Indian companies and will help create a market for home-grown launch vehicles," he said.

Hyderabad-based Skyroot Aerospace carried out the test of the Stage 2 engine that will power the Vikram-1 rocket it plans to launch later this year.

**'Indian biz need to align cyber security budgets with growth objectives'**

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Indian businesses need to align cyber security budgets with their growth objectives to ensure sustainable expansion in the face of increasing digitalisation and associated risks, a top official of Kaspersky has said.

The emergence of new-age technologies, including artificial intelligence and GenAI, is critical for companies to boost their businesses.

"In order to grow businesses, you need to digitise. If you don't digitise, you are not going to have that business growth value," Adrian Hia, Managing Director for the APAC region at Kaspersky, told PTI.

At the same time, the digitalisation of businesses increases the attack surface area, opening avenues for risks like sophisticated cyberattacks.

If Indian businesses aim to

grow by 20 per cent, they also need to boost their cyber security budget by 20 per cent in the course of preparedness against these attacks, Hia noted.

Further, he said that organisations need to upkeep their systems and data while moving towards digital trans-

formation.

In India, malware attacks climbed 11 per cent to 13,44,566 in 2024 against 12,13,528 a year ago, a report by SonicWall said earlier this month.

The number of brute force or targeted attacks is escalating in India, with every third cyber incident reported due to ransomware in 2023, cyber security firm Kaspersky has noted.





## 'My emotional breakdown during shoot of *Adha Re Adha* made me realise *Chalti Rahe Zindagi*'

TEJAL SINHA

**ONE OF THE MOST ACCLAIMED ACTORS FOR HER SUBTLE AND POWERFUL PERFORMANCES, MANJARI FADNIS IS NOW BASKING IN THE PRAISE SHE'S GOTTEN FOR HER MOST RECENT ENDEAVOUR, *CHALTI RAHE ZINDAGI*. IN AN EXCLUSIVE CONVERSATION, SHE SHARES HER THOUGHTS ON THE MOVIE AND DIVULGES SOME NEVER-BEFORE-SEEN INFORMATION**

The challenging stages of life are truly the trials that can either build you up or tear you down. How you proceed with it will vary based on how you want to move forward with it. This is what we get to see in Zee5's latest venture, *Chalti Rahe Zindagi*, translating to 'Life Moves On'.

Directed by Aarti S Bagdi, the film revolves around the emotional turbulence experienced by three families during the pandemic. After her remarkable performances in a few notable films, we see Manjari Fadnis playing the character of Naina in the final part of 'The Intergenerational Conflict' in the Seth family.

With her years-long bond that she has shared with the director, it was a no-brainer for her to get on board. Having previously worked on a short film, *Khamakhan*, that won a Filmfare Award, the kind of project that she invests in is what really attracts her the most about her project. "The kind of project director makes are so lighthearted and slice-of-life, while they are also life-performing," begins Manjari, who is currently enjoying the love she's been receiving for *Chalti Rahe Zindagi*. Initially, when the director approached her and she read the script, she was already in love with the character and the way the story was divided into three parts. She's always smiling every time she watches her films! *Chalti Rahe Zindagi*, she says, brings that light-hearted feeling to the viewers.

In her part, she plays the character of the OCD-afflicted matriarch Leela's (played by Seema Biswas) daughter-in-law. She feels the serious subject that the part was based on was portrayed in the most entertaining way. "Without being preachy, the audience will understand the message in the best of its



way," shares the *Jaane Tu... Jaane Tu Ya Jaane Na* fame. She, in fact, goes on to reveal that the script was written during the lockdown. "The DOP, Barkha, Indraneil and Aarti were all living in the same society and were quarantined during the pandemic. They ended up making a short story, which was the first part of *Chalti Rahe Zindagi*. Later, she was like, why don't we make a film with three different stories?"

With the COVID outbreak, their team had worked with about only 15 people on the sets, which seemed like a family. Her part was, in fact, shot in the director's house. The shooting felt like a 'work from home' experience.

"It was a blessing," says Manjari, who was pretty ecstatic to closely work with Seema Biswas on the project. "Working with an actor who has been so dedicated to the craft for so many years. She's such a fine actress. Just watching her perform was such a pleasure. I was lucky that my entire track was back and forth with her. The whole episode is about the chemistry between a mother-in-law and a daughter-in-law. It's beautifully written and executed. I really enjoyed playing the entire role. The layers that she brought into her character with some beautiful elements were just commendable. She has dedicated so many years of her life to the craft."

*Chalti Rahe Zindagi* also aims to portray the emotional turmoil faced by three families amidst the COVID-19 crisis. Speaking of their part of the concept, it was certainly not much relatable to the *Muthirai* actress because, "I am a very different person in real life. Naina is a widow who is the

breadwinner of the family and is taking care of her mother-in-law. My whole life revolves around taking care of the family. The kind of pressure the character goes through is so intense, but again, that's the fun of being an actor. When you get to play a character who is very different from your life, it is very important to have an understanding of someone else's life. I had to put myself in the shoes of the character. Otherwise, I'm a very pampered one in my house. I'm the only child of my parents, so they have been spoiling me rotten (she laughs out loud)."

There was an unhappy occurrence that Manjari revealed to us. "Just five minutes before I had to leave to shoot the song, *Adha Re Adha*, a joyous tune in which Naina dances in excess, I received really sad news: I sadly lost my dog, Pari, in Pune. To be honest, I have no idea how I shot the music. She was like my little kid and when my mother called, she was inconsolable. I simply couldn't think of anything, so I asked Aarti and the crew for ten minutes. After that, I went to the make-up room, phoned my mother and had one more look at Pari (she was emotional)."

She goes on, "I was completely broken and I did not know how I was going to shoot. I shut myself down for 10 minutes and I was like, the whole unit is waiting for me. I did not want to waste a day of shoot and honour the commitment I have given. I just blocked my emotions, went out and shot for 16 hours straight and just broke down. But yeah, that was the one moment I realised, *Chalti Rahe Zindagi* and the show must go on."

The talented actress, who has *Pune Highway*, a cameo role in Abbas Mastan's next and *Zindagi Namkeen* with Shreyas Talpade in the kitty, brings an exclusive revelation as we head towards the end of this chat: "Not many people are aware that I'm a singer too and just a while back, I had my song *Aao Na* from the album *Lo-Fi Baarish* out, which was directed by Gaurav Das Gupta."

So, here's more about her music coming in the future, along with her acting ventures!

### EVENT COVERAGE

## PAY AS YOU PLEASE!

AARTI SREENATH

Akan Hyderabad, celebrating the occasion of the 78th Independence Day, transformed into a sanctuary of culture, community and charity with its first fundraiser event, *Akan Aahvaanam*. This event, a unique 'pay as you please' lunch, beautifully merged the rich culinary traditions of our region with a profound spirit of philanthropy.

The idea of this one-day affair was simple yet impactful: serve local delicacies on banana leaves, take us back to our roots while allowing guests to contribute whatever they felt was fair, all in the name of supporting a worthy cause.

Walking into Akan, I was immediately struck by the transformation. The contemporary vibe of the resto-bar had given way to an aesthetic steeped in tradition. The sunlight bathed every corner and the servers, dressed in dhotis with tricolour scarves draped over their shoulders, added to the uniquely Indian atmosphere. The décor was complemented by the soulful strains of a live sitar performance by the acclaimed Swamyam Siddha, creating an ambiance that was both serene and deeply connected to our heritage.

*Motichoor Rabri Parfait*, with its naturally tri-coloured layers, was not just a treat for the taste buds but also a visual delight, perfectly symbolising the spirit of the day.

Amidst the aroma of these traditional dishes, there was a palpable sense of community. Shilpa Reddy, a holistic lifestyle influencer, captured the sentiment perfectly when she shared, "Akan Hyderabad has put together an amazing traditional meal and the fact that guests can pay as they please to support the cause is an incredible thought. It's a drop in the ocean, but as we know, drops like these make an ocean."

The event wasn't just about food; it was about giving back. Nageshwar Reddy Gurrula, one of the key organisers, shared his vision for *Akan Aahvaanam*, saying, "As the spirit of Independence Day beckoned us to reflect on freedom and unity, the team at Akan felt a deep-seated desire to give back in a meaningful way. Reflecting on six months of creating beautiful memories and hosting successful events, we sought to honour our journey and the community that has supported us. Just as trees do not consume their own fruit and rivers do not drink their own water, we believe that our purpose extends beyond ourselves—to uplift others selflessly, embodying the true essence of humanity."

The funds raised from the event were directed towards the Extra Mile Foundation, an organisation dedicated to providing critical aid to premature babies in NICU units within underprivileged families. Nihal Reddy Gurrula expressed his gratitude, noting, "Every rupee raised will support the Extra Mile Foundation. By participating, each of our guests helped to make a tangible difference in the lives of those in need. We plan to do more such events in the future."

Adding to the event's appeal were the appearances of actors Rag Mayur and Priya Vadlamani from the latest ETV Win release, *Veeranjaneyulu Vihara Yatra*. Their presence brought an additional layer of excitement, with Rag Mayur commenting, "This is a unique event for a good cause. We are delighted to be part of this amazing

deed on Independence Day." Dr. Nitisha Bagga of the Extra Mile Foundation was also present, underscoring the event's significance. She witnessed firsthand the generosity of the guests, who not only enjoyed the traditional Telugu vegetarian meal but also contributed generously to the cause.

Akan's "Aahvaanam" was not just a culinary experience; it was a celebration of community, a reminder of our cultural roots, and most importantly, a powerful weapon for the impact of coming together for a cause that truly matters. This fundraiser set a new benchmark for charitable events in the city and I eagerly anticipate many more to come.



## 'Every detail was a clue': UMESH BIST ON *GYAARAH GYAARAH*

PNS|HYDERABAD

For filmmaker Umesh Bist, mysticism and mystery are not just narrative devices; they are the essence of his latest creation, *Gyaarah Gyaarah*. This series explores the fluidity of time, where the past, present and future intertwine in unexpected ways, blurring the lines between what is real and what is surreal.

With *Gyaarah Gyaarah*, he has crafted a story that transcends conventional narrative structure, turning it into a complex puzzle that challenges viewers to look beyond the surface. The series invites audiences into a world where the ordinary collides with the extraordinary and every moment is layered with deeper meaning. Time seems to bend and stretch, creating a delicate interplay between the familiar and the fantastical.

"When I first encountered the concept of *Gyaarah Gyaarah*, I was immediately drawn to its core elements—mysticism and mystery. These are themes that have always fascinated me and *Gyaarah Gyaarah* presented a unique opportunity to explore them in depth," he reflects. But the challenge wasn't merely to explore these themes; it was to structure them in a way that would be both intellectually stimulating and emotionally resonant for the audience. "The key was to create a multi-layered narrative that was intricate but not overwhelming, allowing viewers to immerse themselves in the story without getting lost in its complexity."

At the heart of *Gyaarah Gyaarah* lies the concept of synchronicity—the seemingly magical alignment of internal desires and external events, where outcomes manifest without a clear cause-and-effect relationship. It's as if the universe conspires to make dreams a reality, an idea beautifully encapsulated by the angelic numbers 11:11, which serve as both the title and the symbolic anchor of the series. Bist describes this concept as the driving force behind the story: "Synchronicity is a phenomenon that defies logic. It's like dreaming of something and suddenly it begins to manifest in your life without any rational explanation. This mystical element became the foundation on which we built the entire narrative."

But bringing such a complex and layered concept to life required more than just a strong storyline—it demanded meticulous attention to detail and a deep understanding of the viewer's journey. *Gyaarah Gyaarah* unfolds across multiple timelines, each distinct yet interconnected. For Bist and his team, the challenge was to ensure that these timelines were not only clear but also engaging. "We knew from the beginning that this series wouldn't be one that viewers could watch passively. It's an interactive experience. The audience needs to be fully present, questioning and seeking answers that may only come much later in the series. It's this gradual unfolding that makes *Gyaarah Gyaarah* so rewarding for those who invest in it," the *Pagglait* fame explains.

To help viewers navigate the complexity, he employed subtle yet effective visual cues. The use of different color palettes to distinguish between timelines is a masterstroke in visual storytelling. "We played with colour to guide the audience subconsciously. For instance, scenes from the past with Shaurya are bathed in warm tones, while the present with Yug in 2016 is depicted in cooler hues. By the end of the first episode, your senses are trained to recognise which timeline you're in just by the colour on the screen," he elaborates. This attention to detail extends beyond color—production design, costumes and camera work all contribute to a seamless experience that keeps the viewer anchored in the story no matter how many layers it unfolds.

As *Gyaarah Gyaarah* continues to captivate audiences, his vision remains clear: to create a series that is as intellectually challenging as it is emotionally fulfilling. "It's not just about telling a story; it's about inviting the audience to participate in it, to feel the synchronicity and to be as much a part of the journey as the characters themselves. That, to me, is the essence of *Gyaarah Gyaarah*," he concludes.

With *Gyaarah Gyaarah*, Umesh Bist has not only crafted a series but an experience—one where every detail is a clue, every scene a step closer to uncovering the mysteries that lie at the heart of this enthralling tale. It's a journey through time, space and the very fabric of reality itself, leaving viewers both mystified and mesmerised long after the screen fades to black.





Akanksha

Sarmisha

Kushi

A moment of splendour unfolded as Samyuktha Menon, launched the resplendent "2024 Mangala Collection" on the auspicious occasion of Varalakshmi Vratham at TBZ-The Original's renowned Punjagutta store in Hyderabad. The actress was adorned in one of the captivating fancy sets from the collection.



Jagdishwar Hastkala conducted a handloom fashion show at Studio Active, Country Club, in Begumpet on Sunday. The event saw models showcasing the Indian traditional handloom sari collection as a part of the expo, which is going to kickstart from August 20 to 24, at Kalinga Cultural Centre, Road No 12, Banjara Hills.



Priya

**PARTY**



Member of Parliament—Bhongir Chamala Kiran Kumar Reddy, Member of Telangana Legislative Kumban Anil Kumar Reddy and Member of Telangana Legislative Council Teenmar Mallana, inaugurated the project launch of Manduva Homes at Bibinagar, Warangal Highway.



The National egg co-ordination Committee, organised a meet, which focused on raising awareness around 'Health Benefits of Eating Eggs' at Hotel Kinara Grand in Vanasthalpuriam. The speakers of the event included Dr. P.V. Satyanarayana, consultant--cardiovascular sciences and cardiac rehabilitation at AIG Hospital and Dr. N. Ariappa, scientist G and Head--Division of Public Health Nutrition, among the other dignitaries.



Saveetha Dental College and M.K. Mohan Charitable Trust Lead Oral Health Initiative, Screened 3,500 School children Across 12 Municipal Schools, the Department of Public Health Dentistry at Saveetha Dental College, SIMATS, Chennai in collaboration with M.K. Mohan Charitable Trust, Anna Nagar Constituency, organised a series of comprehensive oral health screening and awareness programs



The EducationUSA Fair 2024 launched its eight-city India tour in Hyderabad! This annual event opens doors to endless opportunities for Indian students by connecting them with representatives from top U.S. universities, EducationUSA advisors and U.S. visa processing officials

Rastriya Yuva Hindu Vahini, a dedicated NGO has reaffirmed its unwavering commitment to public welfare and the promotion of Sanatan Dharma under the esteemed guidance of the Defence Minister, Rajnath Singh. They announced their strategic appointment of Smita Grandhi as National Vice President—Women's Cell and Pasupuleti Madhaavi Latha as Telangana spokesperson.



Her affiliation with the UN-accredited non-profit organisation "earth" highlights her dedication to women's empowerment and harmonises well with the Sustainable Development Goal (SDG 5) of the UN on gender equality. In addition to its strong message, *The World of Stree* is unique in that it is the first in the business for a choreographer and actress to share the stage and perform live, showcasing the diverse range of strengths that exist in women



The Clinical Infectious Diseases Society (CIDS) hosted the 14th Annual Conference, CIDSCON 2024, at the HICC. Prof. (Dr.) Atul Goel, Director-General of Health Services (DGHS), Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Government of India, New Delhi, was the chief guest. The event was graced by Dr. Suneetha Narreddy, the organising chairperson of CIDSCON 2024, Dr. Venkat Ramesh, the organising secretary and Dr. O C Abraham, the chairman of the scientific committee. Dr. Sangita Reddy, the joint managing director of Apollo Hospitals Enterprise Ltd., was the guest of honour. Dr. George M. Varghese, the president of CIDS, Dr. Vasant Nagvekar, the secretary and Dr. Ashwini Tayade, the treasurer of CIDS, were also present.

**Photos by - SV Chary**

**FUN**

**ARCHIE**



**CALVIN AND HOBBS**



**GARFIELD**



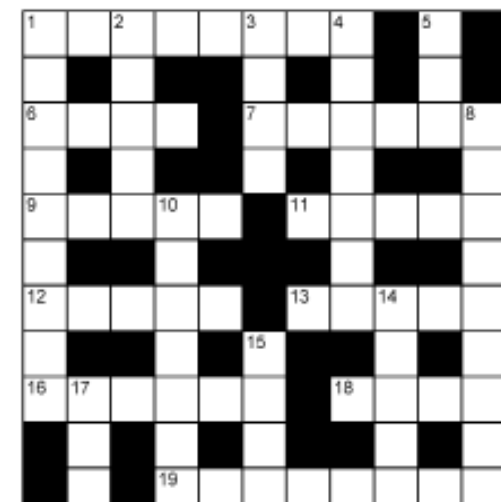
**REALITY CHECK**



**SPEED BUMP**



**CROSSWORD**



**NANCY**



**SUDOKU**



**Yesterday's solution**  
 8 7 2 1 5 6 3 4 9  
 9 5 1 3 4 8 7 2 6  
 3 4 6 9 7 2 5 1 8  
 5 9 7 6 8 1 2 3 4  
 6 1 3 7 2 4 9 8 5  
 4 2 8 5 3 9 1 6 7  
 2 3 9 8 6 7 4 5 1  
 1 8 4 2 9 5 6 7 3  
 7 6 5 4 1 3 8 9 2

**Rules**  
 • Each row and column can contain each number (1 to 9) exactly once.  
 • The sum of all numbers in any row or column must equal 45.

**ACROSS**

- 1 Cold floating chunks in the sea
- 5 A passenger vehicle
- 6 Peas grow in these
- 8 Occurring
- 7 A type of bird
- 10 A hair near your eye
- 9 Of greater age
- 14 Get to
- 11 A long narrow piece
- 15 A heavy metal
- 12 Opposite of outer
- 17 Enquire
- 13 Seven plus five minus nine
- 16 Keep a car in here
- 18 A hired car
- 19 A prickly animal

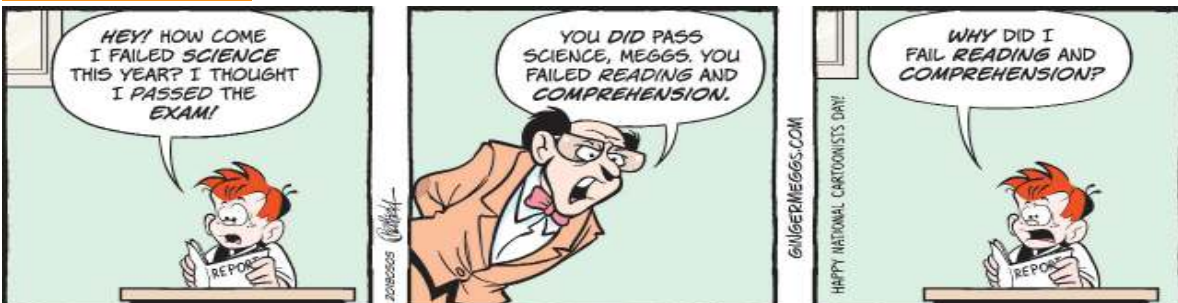
**DOWN**

- 1 Getting better
- 2 Came to a finish
- 3 Animals like large mice
- 4 Make longer by pulling

**SOLUTION**



**GINGER MEGGS**



DIFFICULTY RATING: ★★★★★



# Ankith Koyya's big break in *Maruthi Nagar Subramanyam*!

AARTI SREENATH

Ankith Koyya, a budding actor from Vizag, is set to make a mark with his role in the upcoming film *Maruthi Nagar Subramanyam*, slated for release on August 23. Despite having a string of notable projects under his belt, including *Majili*, *Johar*, *Aswathama*, *Shyam Singha Roy* and the latest *Aay*. He opens up about his journey into acting, the challenges he faced and the excitement surrounding his latest project.

Born and raised in Vizag, Ankith pursued a B.Tech degree from GITAM, Vizag, but it was during his college years that his passion for acting truly blossomed. "I started training aspiring actors in college and that's when I realised that acting was something I wanted to pursue seriously," he reflects. His big break came when he was selected for an OLV ad alongside Allu Arjun, a moment that still fills him with pride. "What made it special was that Allu Arjun personally chose me after seeing my audition," he recalls.

Coming from a family of educators, with his father being a teacher and his grandfather a retired headmaster, Ankith's decision to pursue acting was met with skepticism. "The dream of becoming an actor felt distant, almost impossible," he admits. He had to strike a deal with his parents, promising them that he would give himself a year to break into the industry, after which he would return to a more con-

ventional career if acting didn't work out. Fortunately, things began to fall into place, with roles in films like *Majili* and *Johar* proving his mettle.

The opportunity to play a pivotal role in *Maruthi Nagar Subramanyam* came through a fortunate turn of events. "Indraja, who plays my mother in the film, was the one who suggested me for the role," he shares. Initially, director Lakshman Karya was unsure about casting him, but Ankith's successful audition convinced him otherwise. "Lakshman Anna had his doubts, but after seeing me perform, he decided to take a chance on me."

His role in the film is both peculiar and entertaining. He portrays a character with a delusional sense of self-importance, adding a humorous twist to the narrative. "My character has this attitude as if he wasn't born in this house; instead, he believes he's Allu Aravind's son and Allu Arjun's brother!" he shares, noting how this quirkiness brings a lot of fun to the film.

Fate seems to have linked Ankith's career with the illustrious Allu family. "It's funny how my first project was an OLV ad with Allu Arjun and now *Aay* was presented by Allu Aravind garu," Ankith reflects. In a recent meeting, Allu Aravind humorously remarked to him, "I heard you're playing my son in *Maruthi Nagar Subramanyam*; what's that about?"

Despite his growing experience, he remains grounded, considering himself a "blind actor"



who delivers exactly what the director envisions. He fondly recalls a moment on set when he nervously asked his co-star Rao Ramesh for feedback. "I asked Ramesh if I was doing well and he reassured me, saying, 'You're doing fine; just keep going as you are,'" he recounts. With a lineage of stage actors in his family, he believes that perhaps the acting gene was passed down to him. "My father and grandfather were into stage plays, and maybe some of that talent was inherited." Another significant aspect of *Maruthi Nagar Subramanyam* is the support it has garnered from industry heavyweights.

Sukumar's wife, Tabitha Sukumar, is presenting the film, marking her maiden presentation. "Although I haven't had the chance to meet Sukumar yet, Tabitha has been incredibly supportive throughout this journey," he acknowledges. He adds that director Lakshman shared how Sukumar had watched the film and appreciated the performances of all the actors.

His connection with Niharika Konidela goes back to their collaboration in *Happy Wedding*. Now, working under her production house, he couldn't be more thrilled. "Niharika encouraged me not to miss the opportunity to work in *Maruthi Nagar Subramanyam*. She spoke highly of Lakshman Anna as a director and even helped connect me with the top hierarchy at Pink Elephant production," he reveals, expressing his hope that the film will become a huge success.

As *Maruthi Nagar Subramanyam* gears up for its release, he is filled with anticipation and excitement. With a promising role, the backing of industry stalwarts and a unique connection to some of Telugu cinema's biggest names, Ankith Koyya is on the brink of what could be his most significant breakthrough yet. This film may well be the stepping stone to a bright and enduring career in the film industry.

**ACTOR ANKITH KOYYA, KNOWN FOR HIS PERFORMANCES IN MAJILI, JOHAR AND AAY, AMONG MANY OTHERS, IS ALL SET TO BRING A REMARKABLE PERFORMANCE WITH MARUTHI NAGAR SUBRAMANYAM. AS THE FILM NEARS ITS RELEASE, HE SPEAKS OF HIS FORMATIVE YEARS, WORKING WITH INDRAJA AND MORE**

## MANORATHANGAL: CELEBRATING VASUDEVAN NAIR'S LEGACY

PNS|HYDERABAD

M.T. Vasudevan Nair, fondly known as MT, is a monumental figure in Malayalam literature; his works are considered gold in Indian literary history. Over decades, MT has crafted stories that deeply explore the human condition, blending the everyday lives of Kerala's people with rich emotional and cultural nuances. His ability to capture the essence of ordinary life and elevate it into profound narratives has left an indelible mark on readers across generations. Through his characters, MT gives voice to the often silent and overlooked, solidifying his legacy as one of India's most revered storytellers.

*Manorathangal* (celebrating MT Nair's 90-year legacy) is a fitting homage to this literary giant, bringing together nine of his most cherished stories into a cinematic experience.

**Plot:** Each 45-minute segment begins with Kamal Hassan traversing a vast library, underscoring the profound influence of MT Nair's writing on both himself and society. The series spans a diverse range of themes, from a couple's quest against adversity in *Olavum Theeravum* to a journalist's search for a lost sibling in *Kadugganna Oru Yathra* and the unintended consequences of a sister's pet in *Sherlock*. Other episodes tackle familial disputes, personal connections and life-altering decisions, like a poignant exploration of legacy and mortality in *Swargam Thurakkunna Samayam*.

**The plus:** What sets *Manorathangal* apart is its commitment to character-driven storytelling. Undoubtedly, the USP of the series is the writing, with multidimensional characters who

feel real and relatable. The series doesn't shy away from exploring complex emotions, often leaving the audience with more questions than answers—a testament to its depth and sophistication. The performances across the board are outstanding, with Indrans delivering a particularly memorable performance in the episode *Swargam Thurakkunna Samayam*, which explores human responses to death.

As Kuttyanarayan, a figure who aids people during pivotal life moments and is known for predicting the time of death, Indrans' portrayal is striking.

His precise body language and intense expression make his performance truly compelling and unforgettable. In *Shilalikhitam*, Biju Menon portrays

Gopalankutty, an archaeologist who returns to his village with his teenage daughter. The narrative ultimately undermines the romanticised notion of rural life as idyllic and the villagers as inherently benevolent. Ranjith's *Kadugganna Oru Yathra Kurippu* features Mammooty as a journalist searching for his long-lost step-sister in Sri Lanka, exploring themes of guilt and emotional disparity with poignant sensitivity. In contrast, the reimagined *Olavum Theeravum* (now *Ripples and the River Bank*), directed by Priyadarshan and starring Mohanlal, delves into themes of broken dreams and romance, using black-and-white cinematography by Santhosh Sivan to enhance its visual depth and narrative intimacy.

**The minus:** While the anthology format allows for a variety of stories, it also means that not every episode hits its mark. Some segments feel underdeveloped, leaving viewers yearning for more depth and closure. Additionally, the series' slow pacing can be exhausting, suggesting that a tighter selection of episodes

or a more concise duration might have kept the audience more engaged.

**Technical aspects:** Each episode of *Manorathangal* excels in its portrayal of Malayalam culture through stunning cinematography. The series captures the essence of traditional Kerala with scenes of ancestral homes bathed in the soft glow of oil lamps, evoking a profound sense of nostalgia. The verdant landscapes—spanning lush paddy fields and verdant coconut groves—serve as a picturesque canvas that enriches the storytelling. Everyday details, such as a breakfast of dosas elegantly served on plantain leaves, are rendered with a meticulous eye for authenticity, offering a genuine glimpse into the Malayali way of life.

Rathish Ambat's direction of episode 6, titled *Kadakkattu* (Sea Breeze), is highly commendable. It explores Keshav's (played by Indrajith Sukumaran) struggle with balancing his love for a woman, his job, and his family. Each frame is exquisitely edited by Dilip Damodar, appealing to those with a keen eye for meticulous editing. The soundtrack deserves a special mention. The title track, composed by M. Jayachandran, beautifully encapsulates the mood of each episode, significantly enhancing the emotional depth of the stories. For instance, in episode three, titled *Kazhicha*, which centers around Sudha, a singer grappling with marital strife and complex family issues, the soothing music adds a profound layer of emotional resonance.

**Verdict:** *Manorathangal* stands as a remarkable tribute to M.T. Vasudevan Nair's literary genius, offering a cinematic experience that is both profound and introspective. For those who appreciate cinema in its purest form—where storytelling is paramount, and characters mirror the complexities of real life—this anthology is a must-watch. However, the series requires patience and a willingness to engage with its slower pace and open-ended narratives.



### Nidhi Agerwal joins cast of *The Raja Saab*

The much-anticipated PAN India film *The Raja Saab* surprises fans with an exciting update, announcing the addition of Nidhi Agerwal to its star-studded cast. The announcement, which coincided with Nidhi's birthday, was made by the film's production house, People's Media Factory, through a celebratory social media post. The announcement has sparked curiosity and excitement across the film industry as Nidhi Agerwal joins a stellar cast that already includes superstar Prabhas. The fresh on-screen pairing has instantly become a hot topic, with expectations soaring for the film. Adding to the excitement, the announcement is accompanied by a series of photos shared on Instagram, where Nidhi can be seen celebrating her birthday on set. She is seen cutting a cake and posing with the crew, marking a warm and festive welcome to the team. The post from People's Media Factory read: "Team #TheRajaSaab is thrilled to welcome the stunning @nidhiagerwal onboard! Celebrating her birthday on set with loads of love and excitement."

Produced by People's Media Factory, *The Raja Saab* features a star-studded lineup including Riddhi Kumar, Varalaxmi Sarathkumar, Jishu Sengupta, Brahmanandam and Yogi Babu in key roles. With music by the acclaimed SS Thaman, the film is slated for a grand release on April 10, 2025, in Telugu, Hindi, Tamil, Kannada and Malayalam, ensuring a Pan-India reach.

### Sudheer Babu enters supernatural cinematic universe

Sudheer Babu is all set to elevate with the pan-India film *Jatadhara*, a supernatural fantasy led by ace producer Prerna Arora, who also produced *Pari* with Anushka Sharma in similar genre. The film's first look, featuring Sudheer Babu in a mysterious and powerful avatar with a leading Bollywood heroine and one of the most powerful antagonists is set to join the cast of *Jatadhara*.

Presented by producer Prerna Arora & Sudheer Babu Production, *Jatadhara* aims to raise the bar for Indian cinema, much like the recent cultural sensations *Munjya*, *Stree* and *Kantara*. But *Jatadhara* promises to push the envelope even further, combining mythology, supernatural elements and powerful storytelling into an unforgettable cinematic experience. The film will begin shooting soon in Hyderabad and is slated for a grand release on Mahashivratri 2025!



### Nayan Sarika introduced as 'Satyabhama'

The upcoming project *KA* will mark the grand comeback of Kiran Abbavaram, a dynamic and youthful actor renowned for his series of hit movies. After taking a year off, Abbavaram is getting ready to impress viewers with a grand historical action movie. The fascinating pre-announcement poster with a retro postcard design has generated interest.

*KA* is a film with a significant budget, created by Chinta Gopalakrishna Reddy and produced by Srichakraas Entertainments. The talented debutant directors Sujeeth and Sandeep are at the helm of the film.

On Sunday, the makers released the first look of lead actress Nayan Sarika and introduced her as Satyabhama. In the poster, Nayan looks like a typical South Ammayi. Meanwhile, the makers also announced that the 'World of Vasudha' will be released today at 4:05 pm.



### SREELEELA TURNS DOWN MEGA OFFER IN VISHWAMBHARA

*Vishwambhara* is among the most anticipated movies in the Telugu film industry. The main role is played by the famous superstar Chiranjeevi. Vassishtha, known for *Bimbisara*, is helming the movie with a huge budget. The movie is almost in its final leg and it will feature a special item number. There is a lot of talk in the movie industry that the producers asked Sreeleela to sing a special song, but she surprised everyone by turning down the opportunity. Yes, you read that right. If the latest buzz is to be believed, Sreeleela rejected the offer even though she was offered a large sum of money for it.



### STANDALONE

Telugu Film Chamber of Commerce, Telugu Film Producers Council, Telangana State Film Chamber of Commerce, Director's Association, Movie Artist Association, Telugu Film Employees Federation invited Megastar Chiranjeevi to Nandamuri Balakrishna's Golden Jubilee celebrations. On the occasion of Nandamuri Balakrishna's 50 years of entering the film industry, a grand celebration has been planned by the Telugu film industry at Hyderabad Hitec Novotel Hotel on September 1.



# Our fight will continue, truth will prevail: Vinesh

PTI ■ BALALI (HARYANA)

Overwhelmed by the grand reception she received on her arrival from the Paris Olympics, wrestler Vinesh Phogat said that her fight against the Wrestling Federation of India (WFI) "will continue and hoped that 'truth will prevail'". Hundreds of supporters had gathered outside the IGI airport here on Saturday to give a rousing welcome to Vinesh who was disqualified for being overweight after reaching the 50kg final at the Olympics.

Vinesh's appeal against her disqualification was rejected by the ad-hoc division of the Court of Arbitration for Sport (CAS).

On her way to Balali from Delhi, Vinesh was felicitated by her supporters and 'khap' panchayats in several villages as it took her almost 13 hours to cover 135 kms. She reached her native village in Balali around midnight and was accorded a grand welcome by the villagers. Her neighbours and friends met her with tears and smiles and patted her for the courage she had shown. Exhausted after a tiring journey that began in Paris, Vinesh addressed the gathering before calling it a day.



"Our fight has not ended and the fight will continue and I pray to god that the truth will prevail," said Vinesh while addressing the people. During their sit-in at Jantar Mantar, Vinesh along with Bajrang Punia and Sakshi Malik had spent nights on the streets. They had accused the then WFI chief Brij Bhushan Sharan Singh of sexual harassment of women grapplers. They were evicted when they tried to march towards the new Parliament building.

The case against Brij Bhushan is being heard by a Delhi court. Vinesh said that the welcome she had received on arrival would give her the courage to pick up the threads and get on with life. "As I got love from my fellow Indians, my village and my family members, it would give me some courage to make this wound heal. Maybe, I could return to wrestling," said the 29-year-old Vinesh. "Missing the Olympic medal is the biggest wound in my life. I don't know how much time it would take to heal this wound.

I don't know if I would pursue wrestling or not but the kind of courage I got today, I want to use that in the right direction," she added. Vinesh said she does not know if she deserved the accolades or not. "But I feel extremely lucky to be born in this village. I would always fight for the honour of the women and of this village." The two-time World Championships medalist wished that someone from Balali would better her wrestling achievements. She is a two-time CWG gold

medalist, Asian Games champion and has won eight Asian Championships medals. "I want it from the bottom of my heart that somebody from the village carries my legacy forward and breaks my records. If I can promote women wrestlers of my village, it would be my biggest achievement," she said. "It would be disappointing if no wrestler emerged from this village. We have paved the way with your achievements. I request you all to support the women in this village, they need support if they have to replace us. "They can achieve a lot. All they need is your support. I will always be indebted to this nation, this village. Whatever I have learnt, I will share with my sisters from this village and I wish someone from this village breaks my record." Vinesh had announced her retirement from the sport after her disqualification. In an emotional post on social media, Vinesh shared her childhood dream, the hardships she faced after losing her father, and also put on record the contribution made by people in her extraordinary journey. However, she did not mention her uncle Mahavir Phogat, something that irked her cousin sisters Geeta and Babita.

## BORDER-GAVASKAR TROPHY

# Lyon seeks English spinner Hartley's inputs to tame Yashasvi

PTI ■ SYDNEY



Ace off-spinner Nathan Lyon has already started his homework on rising batting sensation Yashasvi Jaiswal with England spinner Tom Hartley's inputs on the southpaw safely stored in his memory bank ahead of the five-Test Border-Gavaskar series between India and Australia starting from November 22.

Jaiswal, who scored a century on debut in the West Indies last year, scored an astounding 712 runs in the five Test series against England at home earlier this year. But the pace and bounce on offer on Australian tracks will pose a different challenge for the Mumbaikar. "I haven't come across him [Jaiswal] yet, but that will be a massive challenge for all us bowlers," Lyon was quoted as saying by ESPNcricinfo. "The way he (Jaiswal) played against England, I watched that quite closely and thought that was quite amazing. "I had some really good chats with Tom Hartley (England left-arm spinner) about different ways he went about it to different guys which I found quite interesting." Lyon had a stint in English county with Lancashire and had an opportunity to share notes with Hartley, who had 20 wickets in four Tests

against India and he is someone who has first-hand knowledge of Jaiswal's exploits. The 36-year-old Lyon, who has 530 wickets from 129 Tests, feels that with so much information "floating around", Aussies have the best chance to accomplish the "unfinished business" against India. "I love talking about cricket, so if I can talk to someone who has played Test cricket, I might be able to pick up something I'm not aware of. There's so much knowledge floating around this game that we can always tap into." Since winning the 2014-15 Border-Gavaskar 2-0, Australia have lost the next four series against India -- two to Virat Kohli's side (2016-17, 2018-19), Ajinkya Rahane (2021) and Rohit Sharma (2023). "If the plans we've spoken

about come to true, then I think it will be." Along with Lyon, Josh Hazlewood is another survivor from the 2014-15 series and conceded Australia's recent results against India present a significant hole in their record. "It's been ten years of unfinished business, it's been a long time, and I know we're extremely hungry to turn things around, especially here at home," Lyon said. "Don't get me wrong, India is an absolute super star side and extremely challenging but I'm extremely hungry to turn things around and make sure we get that trophy back," he said. Lyon feels that this Australian team under Pat Cummins is slightly different compared to Tim Paine's team that lost back-to-back series against India at home.

## Maharaj helps South Africa secure 40-run win over West Indies in 2nd test

AP ■ PROVIDENCE (GUYANA)

South Africa bowled out West Indies for 222 to secure a 40-run victory on day three of the second test Saturday after Keshav Maharaj wrapped up the win with his fifth wicket of the match.

It was South Africa's tenth consecutive test series win against West Indies and was highlighted by Maharaj becoming South Africa's most successful spinner in tests with 171 wickets after taking his series tally to 13 when he had Jayden Seales out for the final wicket.

That overshadowed a six-wicket haul by Seales in South Africa's second innings as the tourists were dismissed for 246 after resuming on 223-5. That set the West Indies a winning target of 263 but they were in big trouble on 104-6 before Gudakesh Motie and Joshua Da Silva put together a 77-run stand to give the hosts hope of a victory. But Maharaj accounted for them both and then surpassed Hugh Tayfield as South Africa's most successful spinner when Seales was caught by David Bedingham at short leg to cue the South African celebrations.

South Africa scored 160 in its first innings after choosing to bat first and West Indies replied with 144. The teams played to a rain-affected draw in a first test in Trinidad.

# India to open campaign against WI in 2025 Women's U19 T20 WC

PTI ■ DUBAI

Defending champions India will open their campaign against the West Indies in the second edition of the ICC U19 Women's T20 World Cup to be played in Malaysia from January 18 to February 2 next year. India have been clubbed along side hosts Malaysia, West Indies and Sri Lanka in Group A. India defeated England to win the inaugural edition of the tournament in South Africa last year. England, neighbours Ireland, Pakistan and the USA are

placed in Group B. South Africa, along with New Zealand, new entrants Samoa and a qualifier from Africa will form Group C, while Group D comprises Australia, Bangladesh, Scotland, and a qualifier from Asia. Each team will play the other sides in the round-robin phase, making for three games each in the group stage. The top three sides from all four groups will then progress to the Super Six stage. The bottom-ranked sides from Groups A and D, and B and C will contest in last place play-off on January 24. The 12 sides in the Super Six



stage are further divided into two groups, with the top three teams from Groups A and D making up Group 1, and those of Groups B and C making up Group 2. In this stage, each side will

carry forward the points, wins and NRRs (Net Run Rate) they secured against fellow Super Six qualifying sides. Each side will contest two fixtures in the Super Six, against opponents of

corresponding groups that finished at different group positions. The top-two sides from each group will qualify for the semifinals to be held on January 31, with the final slated for February 2. The semifinals and final will all be played at Bayuemas Oval. If India qualify for the semifinals, they will play semifinal 2, which will take place on January 31. There are reserve days for both the semifinals and final. While February 1 is a reserve day for the semifinals, February 3 has been kept as a reserve day for the summit clash.



## Durand Cup: QF fixtures announced; Bagan, EB head for potential derby final

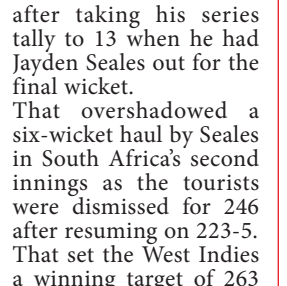
PTI ■ KOLKATA

The quarterfinal fixtures of the 133rd Durand Cup was announced on Sunday with the city hosting Bengaluru FC versus Kerala Blasters match of the tournament at the Salt Lake Stadium on Friday.

Fearing security concerns in the wake of widespread protests for a trainee doctor's alleged rape and murder case in Kolkata, the organisers had on Saturday abandoned the Durand Cup marquee league fixture between Mohun Bagan and East Bengal. Both the teams were awarded one point each as reigning champions Mohun Bagan qualified as group A toppers to be pitted against Punjab FC in the third quarterfinal which will be held at Jamshedpur.

East Bengal made the cut as one of the two best second-placed teams to be drawn against Shillong Lajong FC for the second quarterfinal which will now be held in Shillong instead of the Salt Lake Stadium because of the prevailing unrest in the city. Salt Lake Stadium, however, will get to host the fourth quarterfinal, the match that

does not involve the two Kolkata heavyweights. "After the FC Goa versus Shillong Lajong FC Group F game in Shillong concluded on Saturday evening and it became clear who the eight qualified teams were, a video call was arranged where representatives of all qualified teams came on board. A live draw of lots was then conducted in front of them and two teams to play in each venue was finalised," stated a release. Both Mohun Bagan and East Bengal now find themselves in the opposite end of the draw with a potential derby clash in the Durand Cup final on August 31. The organisers are however yet to confirm the venue for the semifinals and final which are slated at the Salt Lake Stadium. QF Lineups August 21: Northeast United FC vs Indian Army FT (SAI Stadium Kokrajhar; 4pm); Shillong Lajong FC vs East Bengal (Jawaharlal Nehru Stadium, Shillong; 7pm). August 23: Mohun Bagan vs Punjab FC (JRD Tata Sports Complex, Jamshedpur; 4pm); Bengaluru FC vs Kerala Blasters FC (Saltlake Stadium; 7pm).



## Abhay wins maiden Formula 1600 National Championship

PTI ■ CHENNAI

Bengaluru's Abhay Mohan clinched his maiden national title by winning the prestigious Formula 1600 National championship with 10 consecutive wins after the end of the fourth and final round of the MRF-MMSC Indian National Car Racing Championship on Sunday. The 2022 junior national karting champion, who graduated to single seater racing this year, took to the powerful Formula cars like a duck to water, with a phenomenal all-win record till

the penultimate race of the last round. The 16-year-old had an impressive unbeaten run of 10 consecutive races and conceded points only after clinching the championship that featured 12 races. Two Mumbai drivers -- Zahan Commissariat and Raaj Bakhr -- finished second and third respectively in the championship. "This is my first year in single seater Formula cars, but it has been a memorable season. It feels really amazing to be the National champion and to have 10 consecutive wins," said Mohan.

## Priya helps India A beat Australia A in final one-dayer

PTI ■ MACKAY (AUSTRALIA)

Rookie leg-spinner Priya Rmishra grabbed five wickets while Tejal Hasabnis and Raghvi Bist scored half-centuries as India A thrashed Australia A by 171-run in the third and final one-dayer here on Sunday. India A finally achieved success in the third and final one-dayer after having lost five successive games -- three T20s in Brisbane and two one-dayers here -- in the six-match white-ball series. India A scored a modest 243/9, thanks to middle-order batter Tejal's 66-ball 50 and Raghvi's 64-ball 53 before 20-year-old Delhi cricketer Priya took a fiver (5/14) to dismiss the Australia A batting for just 72 runs for a massive win. Playing in only her first match on the tour, Priya dismissed opener Maddy Darke (22) and top-order batter Tess Flintoff (20) as the home team was left



reeling at 52/4 in the 15th over of the chase. She then destroyed the middle order taking the wickets of Nicole Faltum (2), Kate Peterson (1) and Nicola Hancock (0) as the hosts were dismissed in 22.1 over, which gave India A a consolation win. The one-off unofficial Test will be played in Gold Coast from August 22. Earlier, a 104-run partnership between Tejal and Raghvi helped India A overcome a shaky start, which saw them reeling at 43/3 in the ninth

over. The duo, which has stood out in the series for its batting, then carried the team to 147 before Tejal was dismissed in the 28th over. Raghvi too followed suit before Sajeevan Sajana (40) and captain Minnu Mani (34) took the team beyond the 200-run mark. Brief scores: India A 243 for 9 in 50 overs (Tejal Hasabnis 50, Raghvi Bist 53, Sajeevan Sajana 40, Minnu Mani 34; Maitlan Brown 3/39, Charli Knott 2/26). Australia A 72 in 22.1 overs (Priya Mishra 5/14, Minnu Mani 2/4).

# Top-ranked Iga, Jannik reach semifinals in Cincinnati

AP ■ MASON (OHIO)

Top-ranked Iga Swiatek and Jannik Sinner fended off challenges Saturday to reach the semifinals in the Cincinnati Open. Swiatek extended her match winning streak to 15 with a 6-4, 3-6, 7-5 victory over 17-year-old Mirra Andreeva. Swiatek will face third-ranked Aryna Sabalenka, a 6-3, 6-2 winner over 10th-ranked Liudmila Samsonova 6-3, 6-2. Sinner avenged last week's loss to No. 6 Andrey Rublev in the quarterfinals in Montreal with a 4-6, 7-5, 6-4 victory to become the first Italian man to reach the Cincinnati semis in the Open era. "It was very windy and I tried to

be as consistent as possible," Sinner said. "First time that I've played a semifinal in this place, so that's very positive." Swiatek and Sabalenka have met twice already this year, with Swiatek winning finals at Roland Garros and Madrid. Swiatek is 8-3 against the two-time Grand Slam winner. "We're both players that kind of deserve to be in semifinals and finals, because we're working very hard," Swiatek said. "I respect Aryna so much. Physically, she's always fighting and has lots of power." Neither player has reached the final in Cincinnati. Swiatek lost to eventual



champion Coco Gauff last year in her first semifinal appearance. Sabalenka is a three-time semifinalist, including each of the past two years. "We've had a lot of great battles in the past," Sabalenka said. "It's always a high-intensity match. I'm really looking forward to another great battle against her." Sinner will face No. 3 Alexander Zverev. Zverev, the only remaining former champion in the draw, beat Ben Shelton 3-6, 7-6, 7-5. Zverev has won four straight against Sinner. Frances Tiafoe advanced to

the semifinals for the second consecutive year when Hubert Hurkacz retired in the second set because of a calf injury. Tiafoe will face the winner of the late match between Holger Rune and Jack Draper. In the other women's quarterfinals, No. 6 Jessica Pegula outlasted Leylah Fernandez, 6-2, 6-7, 7-6 for her first semifinal berth in Cincinnati. Pegula, coming off a successful title defense Monday in Canada, will face Paula Badosa. Badosa beat Anastasia Pavlyuchenkova 6-3, 6-2. "Paula is really playing some good tennis," Pegula said. "She turned her year around and is finding some form.